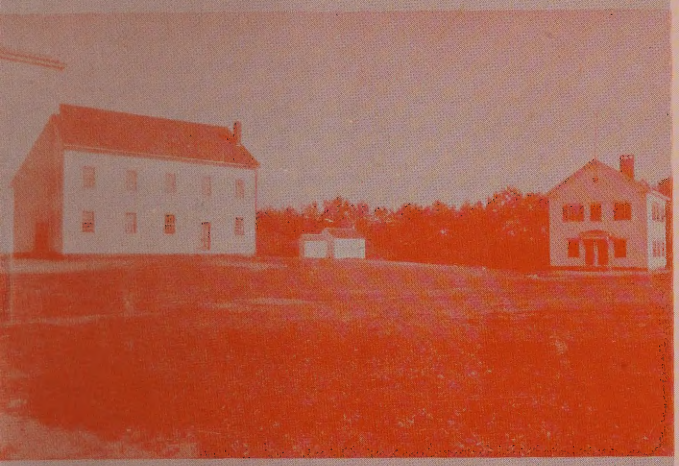
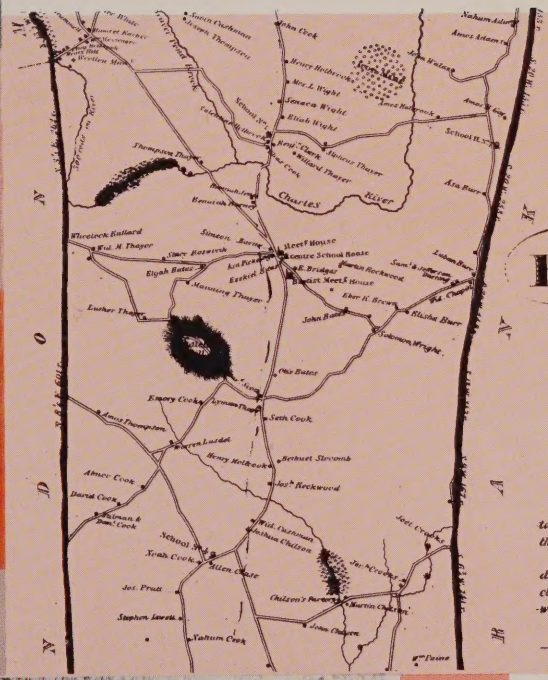
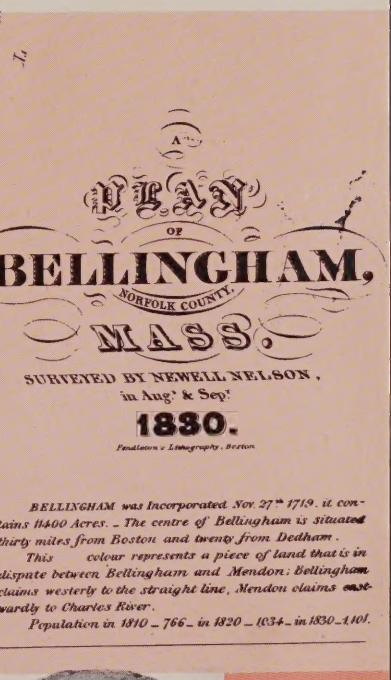
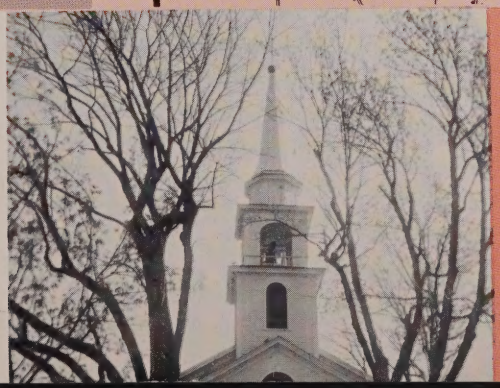
THE TOWN OF BELLINGHAM MASSACHUSETTS

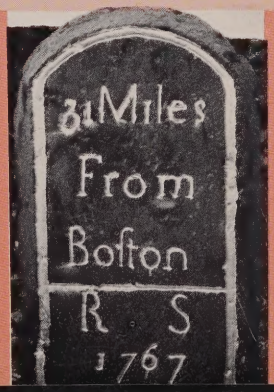
1719 - 1969











Aerial photo taken by Ted Rose.
Plane piloted by Stanley Gardner.

Route 495 cuts through North Bellingham under Hartford Avenue with access and egress ramps. This divided lane highway is an outer circumferential highway surrounding Metropolitan Boston.One end ties into routes connecting with the scenic northern states and north shore cities; the other end will connect with Cape Cod highways and the main highways to New York, the South and the West. The highway was opened in 1968.

The future prosperity of Bellingham will largely depend on our part of making sites available for 'big-industry' occupancy.

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BELLINGHAM, MASSACHUSETTS
CENTENNIAL COMMEMORATIVE COIN

Bellingham was named after the third Governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony Richard Bellingham, a lifelong Puritan leader. In the late 1600's when Baptists and Quakers were struggling for religious freedom, Bellingham land was examined by Dedham Selectmen for settlement. Threatening Indian wars and reported unproductive land made early settlements unadvisable.

In 1719, Bellingham was the last town incorporated in Norfolk County. Early history and records show that the town was once an active and flourishing manufacturing town, producing boots, shoes and other leather goods.

The town is eight miles long, two miles wide at its South end and three miles wide at the North end with an area of 18.55 square miles. It is surrounded by seven Massachusetts towns and a Rhode Island city at its South end.

Today Bellingham is mainly a residential town but one of the fastest growing towns in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

1820	1034 people
1920	2102 people
1945	3494 people
1955	5421 people
1965	10604 people
Anticipated 1969 — over 14,000	

DESIGN OF THE COIN

In January of 1968, art students at Bellingham's Jr.-Sr. Memorial High School were asked to design a seal to be used in the forthcoming Town's 250th Anniversary celebration. Forty-four entries were submitted to the main celebration committee.

On the obverse side of the coin is the Center Baptist Church as it stands today in Bellingham Center. Built in 1826, it is one of the older landmarks in Bellingham, originally settled for the sole purpose of religious freedom. The church bell, seen atop the building, was cast in 1833 by G. H. Holbrook, an apprentice of Paul Revere. Bellingham Baptists who formed a church covenant in 1738, had Noah Alden as minister in 1766.

Alden, great grandson of the famed historical figures, John and Priscilla, was also a member of the Massachusetts convention to form the constitution. This design was submitted by Miss Diane Weston.

On the reverse side of the coin, designed by Joseph Ustinovich, Jr., is a profile of an Indian who represents America's first settlers. In Latin, below the traditional American eagle, is an inscription that reads; "Times are changing for the public good".

THE TOWN OF

BELLINGHAM

MASSACHUSETTS

1719 - 1969

STRUGGLE FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Bellingham's most significant contribution, in its 250 years of existence, was the part it played in the fight for religious liberty. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts is in debt to this town and its early settlers, who hold a prominent place in the annals of history, in their fight for equality and liberty, a half century before Lexington and Concord.

According to Dr. William G. McLoughlin, of the Dept. of History at Brown University, the Rev. Noah Alden deserves to be honored on our 250th anniversary, for he and his Baptist congregation were in the forefront of the struggle until his death in 1797.

Dr. McLoughlin states that although religious freedom, did not become a reality until 1834, it was then, in the 19th century, that the remaining residents in the state of Massachusetts finally discovered that the minority living in Bellingham, had been right all along.

Richard Bellingham

1591 - 1672

THE Town of Bellingham was named for the third governor of the colony of Massachusetts Bay, a puritan lawyer, Sir Richard Bellingham. Sir Bellingham, whose name is preserved in Hawthorne's famous "Scarlet Letter", was born in England in 1591 and educated as a lawyer there.

THIS PORTRAIT OF RICHARD BELLINGHAM, GOVERNOR OF MASSACHUSETTS, IS THE FIRST PORTRAIT KNOWN TO HAVE BEEN PAINTED IN THIS COUNTRY. IT WAS PAINTED BY WILLIAM READ AND SIGNED BY THE GOVERNOR IN 1641

Sir Richard Bellingham was one of the original twenty-six members to draw up the Massachusetts Bay Colony Charter, established in Boston by Puritan leaders for religious and political refuge. Settlers in Boston could not become citizens until they joined the church and were accepted as free men by vote.

Sir Bellingham arrived in Boston with his wife Elizabeth and son Samuel in 1634. The following year he was made Deputy Governor and member of a military commission for public defense granting him extraordinary powers, including the penalty of death. In 1641, he won the election as Governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony by six votes. Because election results were so close, the General Court repealed the Governor's annual grant of 100 pounds, and Sir Bellingham went without salary until October 1643, when the court finally voted him 50 pounds annually.

Bellingham, whose wife Elizabeth passed away before he was elected, lived alone with his son Samuel on Tremont St. in Boston, opposite King's Chapel Burying Ground.

Shortly after his election, Governor Bellingham married Miss Penelope Pelham in defiance of the court, by not publishing his marriage contract where he was resident, also defying the law of the land by performing the marriage himself. This strange yet remarkable marriage is described in Carpenter's "Woman of Shawmut".

Though there is no historical account of the marriage, it is said that Miss Pelham was about to marry a friend of Bellingham's "when on a sudden, the Governor treated with her and obtained her for himself."

When Penelope's brother Herbert reminded the Governor that bans had already been published between his sister and another man, he also asked if under these circumstances, ministers or magistrates would marry them. Bellingham replied, "Is not the Governor of Massachusetts Bay a magistrate who outranks them all?" Herbert, bowing low to the Governor, replied it was so. It was then, Bellingham, seizing Penelope's hand, led her to the center of the room and with his arm around her, ordered Herbert to call forth everyone in "thy household and they shall see Governor Bellingham's power."

Once everyone was assembled, the Governor asked "Penelope Pelham, wilt thou, in the presence of these people, take Richard Bellingham to be thy lawful husband?" She answering softly, "Yes", he continued, "And I, Richard Bellingham, will take thee Penelope to wife. I, the Governor of His Majestry's Colony of Massachusetts Bay, do pronounce and declare that Richard Bellingham and Penelope Pelham are man and wife together. The King shall be my witness."

"The case of Richard Bellingham for breach of order to the court" was presented at the next session of magistrates. Bellingham, who presided, refused to leave his seat and stand at the bar, asking, "Who will command me?" There is no record of further action in the case.

Bellingham's term of office was not smooth. He had a domineering and quarrelsome disposition though a good legal mind and Puritan conscience. Bellingham, who was always in opposition and unfriendly towards other magistrates, lost much respect.

Before his year in office ended, Deputies, with whom he had been more friendly, sent a committee "to give him solemn admonition," something never before done to a Governor.

Bellingham was again elected Deputy Governor in 1653, followed by another one year term as Governor. This term consequently proved unsuccessful as he became Deputy Governor the following year, remaining so for eleven years, when as the only survivor of the original founders of the Colony, once again became Governor and held this office till death.

Governor Bellingham, who died December 1, 1672, rests in the northwest corner of the Granary Burying Ground in Boston. The inscription on his tomb reads:

Virtue's fast friend within this tomb doth lie,
A foe to bribes, but rich in charity.

1591-1672

King Philip's War

King Philip's War was the result of a murder committed in April of 1671 by the son of Matoonas, Sachem of the Nipmucks, who was then living at Pakachoag near Worcester.

Convicted for the death of Zachary Smith, a young traveler who was found dead in Dedham woods, the son of Matoonas was executed on the gallows on Boston Common.

Four years later, nine persons were killed in Swansea and five more were slaughtered a few miles from Bellingham by Nipmucks out of Mendon. Chief Matoonas, who had promised vengeance for his son's execution, was their leader.

The following year, Indians who begged for peace were pardoned upon surrender. However, Chief Matoonas goaded on by King Philip, who went about terrorizing Plymouth Colony, killed two more men in Mendon and he himself was later executed by three Indians on Boston Common.

Mendon and Medfield were most exposed to Indian attacks. One February morning in Medfield, thirty-two homes and buildings were burned and seventeen persons were killed by the Indians, who then rushed into Medway to set that town on fire. While in Medway, the Indians left a note which read in part, "You must consider that the Indians lose nothing but their lives; you must lose your fair horses and cattle."

One morning after this attack, Captain Rocket, while searching for a stray horse, came across a company of 42 Indians. Rocket followed. When they made camp for the night, he returned to his home in Wrentham, where women and children were gathered into fortified homes. Captain Rocket, commanding a small company of 13 men, returned to the Indian campsite.

When they rose at daybreak, the Indians received the simultaneous fire of 12 guns. Twenty-four were killed. The Wrentham men, uninjured, returned to their homes, where as his reward, Rocket received a life time pension from the state.

But this attack on the Indians did not prove fruitful, for in three weeks, King Philip succeeded in uniting almost every Indian tribe from Maine to Connecticut. War erupted over an area of 200 miles.

The war lasted a year. Its greatest battle occurred in December of 1675, when 1,000 men marched from Dedham to an Indian stockade in Rhode Island and were victorious after a three-hour battle.

The war came to an end in August of 1676 when Indian fighters, finally locating King Philip's camp, shot him to death at dawn as he rushed out of his tent. The dead chief was beheaded and quartered in accordance with English law for treason.

As a result of the war, one in 10 of the 5,000 men of military age in Massachusetts and Plymouth Colonies, was killed or captured. Many women and children also died. Forty of the 80 or 90 towns in eastern New England were badly burned, a dozen completely destroyed. More than 100,000 pounds were spent on military forces, which is said to be more than the entire personal property of the inhabitants.

SECRETARY RAWSON'S FARM

Farming chores at the site of Secretary of State Rawson's farm, in 1969 the location of Pilgrim Village.

Edward Rawson, the first white owner of Caryville and North Bellingham, was a Puritan Secretary in the Massachusetts Colony. His portrait hangs in the Registry of Deeds in Boston. Born in England, in 1615, he married Rachel Perne.

In 1637, the Rawson's settled in Newbury, Mass., where he became the second town clerk serving nine years. He also became a selectman, a judge, and a member of the General Court by the age of twenty-three. In 1650, he became Secretary of the Colony and held that office till his death. His position required him to live on Bromfield Street in Boston, once called Rawson's Lane.

Rawson seemed to take great zeal in persecuting Quakers, for his name often appears as their accuser, though this may have been part of his duty as Secretary.

He published two books, "Revolution in New England Justified" and "The General Laws and Liberties of Massachusetts."

Gradually his salary rose from twenty to eighty pounds as his family increased to twelve children.

His large family was not supported by his salary alone, as he was granted land at various times by the General Court. One such tract, which lay unincorporated for a long time, almost became as well known as the towns which surrounded it. It was known as Rawson's Farm.

He sold three hundred acres and gave his oldest son, William, eight hundred acres during his lifetime. He sold or distributed so much land to his children that his estate was found insolvent.

The farm consisted of about a third of the new town of Bellingham; that which includes Caryville, North Bellingham and part of Mendon, the other two thirds to the south was common land of the town of Dedham.

Two Pioneers - Baptist and Quaker

Several years before King Philip's War, the men of Dedham, during the summer months, gathered hay from meadows on common land today known as Bellingham and Wrentham.

Wrentham was incorporated in 1673. After two years, war broke out. Settlers had to abandon their new homes and return to Dedam, as had been necessary twice before in fear of Indians.

No settlements had yet been made in Bellingham, though there is a vague tradition of a fort or house of refuge from Indians just north of North Bellingham Cemetery. The overthrow of the Indians was so complete, the English soon recovered from their fears. A few Indians remained and some were required to live with white men as their guardians.

In 1691, when colonists from other towns began to spread out, Dedham selectmen sent two men to examine land today known as Bellingham. On January 4, 1692, they reported the land was not worth laying out but on June 7, 1698, "the proprietors of the common land or undivided lands of Dedham" met to divide the land into lots of 100 acres each. Jacob Bartlett and Nicholas Cook were first to settle in Bellingham. Both men are sometimes referred to as pioneers of the town.

Strong and independent, both were of Rhode Island colony beliefs rather than Massachusetts, as they belonged outside the strict Puritan colony thinking, as were most of their neighbors. Existence of two different colonies is an important factor in the town's history.

Early Massachusetts settlers were of Puritan Faith. In 1630, by order of the General Court, church ministers were to be supported at public expense. By 1631, unless a man was a member of the church, he could not vote or be admitted as a free man. Anyone absent from a church service by 1635, was fined or imprisoned. It was decided the following year that new churches could not be formed without approval of magistrates and existing churches.

Therefore, the rule of the word of God meant persecution. The neighboring colony, Rhode Island, became refuge for Baptists and Quakers.

Massachusetts churches baptised infants by sprinkling but Baptists considered this an unscriptual, useless ceremony because infants were too young to understand. They insisted no one join a church without being re-baptised at an understanding age.

Quakers also troubled Massachusetts authorities. They wanted to abolish oaths, distinctive ceremonies, church sacraments and war. They worshipped in a simple manner hoping for the conscious presence and control of the Holy Spirit in each man's life.

The persecution of Quakers was unsuccessful in keeping them away, though most made their

The North Bellingham Cemetery older than the town itself.

settlements in the Roger Williams area of Rhode Island, where each was a free man no matter what his religion was.

Bellingham's first family lived in true pioneer region with little interference from church or state. No births were found in town records, for Quakers kept their own. They disapproved of inscriptions on gravestones. They believed all men should be equal, even in the grave. Their family burial grounds had about two dozen rough stones left in 1879.

Jacob Bartlett, who was a Quaker, purchased the first lot of land in Bellingham in 1696. Exactly where his home was located is not known, it may have been in Woonsocket, a north east corner, which was once part of this town.

Our first settlers had little to fear from wild beasts. In 1698, the town of Dedham offered a reward of 20 shillings for every wolf and wildcat killed and six pence for a rattlesnake. All soon disappeared. With the Indians gone, Bartlett had only the strict laws of Massachusetts to fear. Having escaped them for almost thirty years, he was finally imprisoned in Boston, for refusing to support the town church.

Massachusetts' intolerance was troublesome for Baptists as well. Nicholas Cook, our second pioneer, was born in Mendon in 1660. A Baptist, he married Joanna Rockett in 1684 and married Mehitable Staples in 1712. Land was laid out to him east of the Great River (Blackstone) and on both sides of Peter's River. The new settlers were very poor. In 1706, Cook, in behalf of himself and several neighbors, asked to be relieved from Dedham town taxes for two years. It was granted. In 1708, he was constable for that part of town, leading us to believe he was possibly a principal citizen there. In 1713, he gave his son Nicholas Jr. land situated partly in Mendon and partly in Bellingham. At a meeting held in Cook's house in 1717, it was voted to complete by June 30, 1717, the first and second divisions and later to lay out the third. Thomas Sanford was the moderator. Also voted on were two or three acres to be used as a burying place later to be known as the South Bellingham Cemetery. Cook, who died December 1, 1730 at the age of 71, is buried in South Cemetery.

Early Settlers
and the Year they Settled

Jacob Bartllett	1698
Nicholas Cook	1698
Richard Blood	1708
Thomas Burch	1700-1701
Banfield Capron	1717
Dr. John Corbet	1703
Zuriel Hall	1714
John Marsh	1712
Eleazar Partridge	1720
Caleb Phillips	1727
Samuel Rich	1702
Deacon Thomas Sanford	1701
Pelatiah Smith	1714
Isaac & Ebenezer Thayer	1717
Nathaniel Weatherby	1717
Chilson	1699
Darling	1707
Haywards	1700-1701
Holbrook	1706
Ingalls	1705
Jillson	1714
Scott	1725
Thompson	1701
Wight	1729

A petition to the House of Representatives signed by 33 petitioners dated Nov. 26, 1719 asked that a Township be erected and constituted, provided that the petitioners would procure a learned orthodox Minister within the next three years, and this new town should be called Westham. On the next day, November 27, 1719 everything was accepted by the House, with the exception that the name of the new town should be Bellingham. Why the name, Westham, did not pass has never been explained.

TOWN AFFAIRS
1719 - 1919

The oldest town records belonged to land owners and covered a period of time from 1714 to 1813. The eight volumes available cover many phases of life including; lists of town officers; records of votes at meetings; the laying out of roads; allowing swine to roam at large; including warnings to people from out of town apt to become paupers and dependent on the town.

The first town meeting was held on March 2, 1720 in the home of "Ensign John Thompson." Pelatiah Smith, moderator, was elected town clerk and John Holbrook, treasurer. It was also voted to elect town officers annually on the first Wednesday in March. Plans for a meeting house were considered. Five meetings were held that first year.

In 1721 the town voted to be excused from sending a "Deputy" to the General court, repeating this action for many years. In 1722 the meeting house was completed. Until 1774 it stood near the corner of Blackstone and South Main Streets. (Across from the Jr. Sr. Memorial High School.)

In 1727 town boundaries were disputed with Wrentham when that town wanted to annex three hundred acres in the South East Corner, but the boundary was left as it had been fixed in 1661.

At the annual town meeting in 1739 a group of dissenting citizens went to General Court to invalidate the town meeting, stating it had begun an hour earlier than usual and some had not been present. Eventually the General Court upheld the original meeting.

Free school was voted upon in 1737. Sessions were to be held for six months, meeting in five different homes. Eighty pounds was voted to support the town church that year with forty pounds for all other expenses, including the school.

Two years later, the school was voted down; but voted on again in 1740 at a cost of thirty pounds; omitted the next three years; but finally supported afterwards.

In 1742, thirteen Mendon men asked the General Court to allow their land to become part of Bellingham. As a stipulation, however, it meant moving the meeting house to the north of the Charles River, which was approved. When the General Court considered the town of Mendon's objections, though, it was not approved. That same year the town voted not to support the minister.

Old brick school house on South Main Street, in 1969 across from Lou's Market.

Approximately one third of Bellingham's taxes were lost sometime in 1740 when settlers in the south learned that Rhode Island paid less taxes. They petitioned that state to allow them to join their colony. The boundary line, long in dispute was only temporary. Rhode Island's map of 1750 shows the southern tip of Bellingham four miles north of where it is today. Boundaries were uncertain as late as 1773 when a petition to the General Court claimed Bellingham to be five or six miles long.

Seven school districts were formed in 1744 to include fifty families, with each child meeting at a particular home in their district. The first school was built in 1790. In 1747, three houses were used and school costs were ten pounds.

Only two of two thousand seven hundred and thirty-four slaves in the Commonwealth, were found in Bellingham in 1754.

In 1756, the town petitioned the General Court to free it from its fine for not sending a representative. Because there were so few settlers, the town had not sent one. Ten pounds was granted to pay the fine.

In 1762, a committee was formed to recommend one central location for a new meeting house as the old one was in poor condition. It was not until forty years later, however, that today's present town hall was built.

Holliston reminded the General Court, of an order voted two years previously, concerning a family of Nova Scotia refugees that were to be supported one half by Holliston and one half by Bellingham. Holliston supported them for two years when a kindhearted sheriff took them all to that town not to separate them. Now it was Bellingham's turn. In 1762, three pounds and seven shillings was voted for their support. The James Merow family was mentioned in 1764, when a bill for the rent was presented to the town in the sum of one pound eighteen shillings for a house owned by Benjamine Partridge, Jr.

The school was kept by town citizens in its early years. Michael Metcalf was designated in 1760, and in 1765 and other years, Benjamin Partridge.

1765 brought another quarrelsome town meeting. It was held on March third but did not adjourn until March fifteenth. At the second meeting, the moderator asked to be dismissed and all the other officers were removed. Another petition made its way to General Court and the action at the second meeting was annulled. At the July meeting, to complete the March third list of officers, another dispute began over increasing the number of selectmen to nine. The General Court was required to interfere once again in January of the following year and ruled selectman could not be increased, only the list of officers could be completed.

In 1767 town warrants were posted at three meeting houses; the old original one; the Baptists'; and the Universalists', later turned into a tavern by Wright Curtis at Crooks Corner.

Built by Stephen Metcalf in 1777 on Hartford Avenue in Caryville and owned by Orie Van Rye in 1969.

In the year 1772, another protest was sent to the General Court. Townspeople felt the valuation of their property for taxes was outrageous. Useless buildings and shops, non-existing structures, cow pastures, tons of hay and barrels of cider were valued above those of surrounding towns. To make matters worse, the town was fined for not sending a representative to the General Court for two years. At the time, Bellingham was part of Suffolk County and the furthest town from Boston. In the following year, attempts to pass a motion asking the General Court to reconsider the fines and valuations were made, but it did not carry.

In 1774, the first meeting house was sold at auction in several lots.

In 1774, Luke Holbrook was a delegate to the provincial Congress at Cambridge. Stephen Metcalf was the first representative in General Court from this town. On January 9, 1775 Selectmen disowned England's authority. The following year, town warrants read: "The Government and People of Massachusetts Bay."

Crook's Tavern, kept by Jeremiah Crooks 1834-1860, was located near the 1969 site of The Beverly.

On July 4, 1776, the town voted to support the Continental Congress vote to declare themselves independent of Great Britain for the safety of the united colonies. In September the Massachusetts House of Representatives met to set up their Constitution.

In the midst of excitement and distress of war, Sylvanus Scott and his wife died of Small Pox. Quarentine homes were designated throughout the town.

A committee was chosen, to hire men for the service of defending the United States at the town's expense, in May of 1779. Soldiers were paid bounties amounting to 12,158 pounds in Continental currency of varying value and 2,564 pounds in solid gold.

The General Court, at a convention in 1778 formed a constitution for the state but it was rejected. It was not until the following year that progress was made. In the Bill of Rights, Article III, Religious Rights, required most discussion. A committee of 7 men was chosen with the Baptist elder of Bellingham as chairman. Their proposal was adopted without much change. In substance it read: Towns were required to provide for public worship and teachers of morality. People were required to go to church. Towns could choose their own teachers. All religious denominations were equally protected by law. All taxes for religious purposes, would support teachers. In 1833, Amendment XI provided any religious society to tax its members but only with their own consent. This was more acceptable by all sects. In March, the Constitution was adopted by vote and it went into effect in June.

The South Milford Mill built in 1812 and burned in 1868.

Anson Wheelock place about 1865 now the convent for Assumption parish located on Paine Street in South Bellingham.

A description of the town, in 1784, in a Gazetteer read as follows: Bellingham — there is but one pond, Beaver Dam Pond, remarkable for depth of water and miry shores almost surrounded by a cedar swamp. Into Charles River flows three small streams; North Branch, Stall Brook and Beaver Dam Brook. Peter's River and Bunge Brook in the south part empty at Providence. There are two grist mills, two saw mills, and one fulling mill (process that thickens wool) but of little use except in winter for want of water, nor all even used then. Roads are tolerably good but in some places very sandy. Trade is very small, people depend on the land and some mechanical employments. Almost every family is provided with a pair of looms with which to make nearly enough clothing for themselves. Farms number about 80. Inhabitants are equally divided between Congregational and Baptist persuasions. The latter have a house with a settled minister."

In 1814 a voluntary military company was formed, the "Bellingham Rifles."

The store in Bellingham Centre had been kept for several years but in 1815 Christopher Slocumb ended his partnership with John Thayer.

After a century of slow population growth, factories were built on Charles River and by 1820 there were 1,034 persons living in Bellingham.

Many times in the town's history it had been proposed to change our boundaries. Besides the long continued waverings of Wrentham, there was also a dispute of the state line between Massachusetts and Rhode Island. In 1730 part of Mendon was declined, but afterwards invited to join us, in vain. The West Parish of Medway, incorporated for church purposes only, could have easily become a town itself as was proposed in 1807. People from the four towns to which it belonged asked, in 1816, to state reasons both for and against that change. Agitation increased for several years, but in 1824 men from Medway, Holliston, Franklin, and Bellingham raised $360 to accomplish it. Bellingham voted against because the town would lose an eighth of its land, a seventh of its valuation and more than one sixth of its inhabitants. The Petition was refused by Legislature. The proposal, later renewed, interested only a few persons.

In 1830, the town voted to put a man and his wife out to any suitable lowest bidder, and to sue their son unless he paid for half their support. Perhaps this sad case led to the purchase of the town farm the following year. The town built a temporary hospital on the farm in 1836.

The town farm as it looked in 1915 now owned by Benjamin Stratman.

In 1832, it was voted that all town business be handled annually at the March meeting only.

A school report for 1841 showed nine schools with two hundred and seventy-three pupils. Male teachers received $15.85 salary, plus $6.75 board and women $7.00 salary plus $5.20 board a month. Wage for highway work was ten cents an hour.

The south end was highly excited in 1842 by a strange civil war in Rhode Island. The colony's charter, granted by King Charles II of England in 1663, gave Colonial assembly the right to admit as voters "such persons as they shall think fit." South Bellingham people were concerned about getting involved in a war which really would not benefit them, since they were residents of another state.

In colonial times only landowners could vote. Therefore, the northern part of the town fared worse than the south, because all the men of the south part owned land and were farmers.

In 1843, the Woonsocket Patriot, the first and greatest of any local newspaper from adjoining towns read by town people, advertised a stage

Electric car at Bellingham Center in front of Town Hall before turn of the century.

going through town. This was the only public transportation until 1847 when the Providence and Worcester Street Railroad began operation. In 1897, electric cars ran from Caryville to Milford and Medway.

First printed school committee report was issued in 1847.

At the center of the town in the triangle fronting Baptist church is monument placed by Citizens of Bellingham in Commemoration of

those who gave their lives in supporting the principles of the national constitution.

The first board of auditors was chosen in 1849.

In 1855 a temperance committee of three was chosen to investigate and "Root out all such existing evils as may be found in said Town." A Town liquor agent was also chosen that year.

In 1860 it was voted to print an annual report of the town's business.

Memorial Day appropriations were first made in 1892 and amounted to $50.00.

Land was bought to enlarge the town house lot in 1870, adding more room to the school's yard. $3,000 was voted for a new building in 1873. The streets were named and signs were put up in 1878.

It was voted to build a school in North Bellingham in 1881 at a cost of $3,000, which wasn't built at this time.

The Bellingham Grange of the Patrons of Husbandry was formed in 1891.

Water Pipes were laid, from Woonsocket, on Center Street today known as Pulaski Blvd. in 1893.

The state library act was accepted in 1894 and the following year it was voted to build a two-room school house at Crook's Corner at a cost of $3,000. It was in 1896 that the town's high school held its first graduation, but a few years later high school was discontinued and students attended schools in Franklin, Medway, and Milford.

A state highway ran from Crook's Corner toward the Center, in 1900. Liberal appropriation was made that year for old record books and they were put in good condition.

It was voted, in 1901 to build a schoolhouse for North Bellingham and Caryville, also to add two rooms to the Center building.

Not until 1904 did the telephone reach Scott Hill from Woonsocket. Gas pipes from that city were laid along Pulaski Blvd. the following year.

The South Bellingham Schoolhouse had 2 rooms added in 1906.

In 1907 electric lights were brought into Caryville and North Bellingham, but they did not reach the South End until 1909.

Appropriations were made, in 1910 to fit the lower floor of the town house with offices, a vault for records, dining room, etc.

First class at South Grammar School about 1895.

Hey Days at Hoag Lake

By Susan C. Parenteau

Though it were many years ago, many of the area's senior citizens have treasured the memories spent at Hoag Lake in Bellingham, today known as Silver Lake. Some say the town was built around the lake while others remember it as a Disneyland of the north.

Mrs. Eleanor Smith, the former Eleanor Bertine Crooks, sister of tax assessor Elsworth R. Crooks, who still maintains residence at the lake on Cross St. in Bellingham as well as Clearwater, Florida, told us of those days in the early 1900's when she was just "a twinkle in my parents' eyes".

Competing with Lake Nipmuc in Mendon, Hoag Lake's advantage were "electric cars," swarmed with passengers from Woonsocket, Providence, Franklin, Milford and the Attleboro's. For a mere five cent fare, passengers traveled to the depot on Cross St. where today stands the home of the late Bellingham Police Chief, Euclide Fleuette.

Among Hoag Lake's attractions were a glassed-in merry-go-round, later moved to Roger Williams Park in Rhode Island; a large dining hall; and top notch RKO vaudeville acts from New York City in the summer theater on the knoll.

Before the crowd attended the theater, however they usually enjoyed an outside show which featured Angie and her famous lion act, "while the band played Carmen, to soothe the savage beasts", Mrs. Smith pointed out, while after the theater performance, the crowd would cross the wooden bridge to a ballroom on the island for a few dances before ending the evening.

It was in these surroundings that Miss Bertine Converse Marsh, trap drummer of Etta Highland's all woman orchestra met and married Hiram E. Crooks, a policeman who also rented boats and canoes at the lake.

Edgar K. Ray, owner of the fun spot, also featured King and Queen, two huge white horses that would dive from a lofty tower to water tanks below. Victor Vekeman was publicity manager.

Ladies orchestra at Hoag Lake early 1900's including: Bertine Converse Marsh, Etta Highland, Sadie Bissell, Hattie Litchfield and one unknown.

Consternation erupted when Mabel Ward of Milford, fell from the ballroom ascension, breaking her leg. One time the balloon was lost, said Mrs. Smith, and James Richardson a Hoag policeman, dreamt where it had landed. Richardson received a ten dollar reward when the balloon was found in the same spot as he had dreamed.

By the time Hoag Lake became Silver Lake and autos replaced electric cars, the beach became the Lake's main attraction as the theater and buildings had burned down.

Jack McCarthy, formerly of Framingham, Mass., now owns Silver Lake. Though it's come a long way in the past few years, McCarthy has dreams of someday re-capturing those yester-year memories of Mrs. Smith and so many others.

Only time will tell.

Hoag Lake including the theatre, merry-go-round, cafeteria, and The Black Mar Hotel now Silver Lake.

An Ideal Place to Spend a Vacation

EXAMPLE OF ADVERTISEMENT

Brochure circulated primarily to 'stage people' in early 1900's.

Fairview House, (at corner of Hartford Ave. and Grove St.), is one of the healthiest and most popular resorts in Mass. It is on a high elevation in one of the most healthy and beautiful localities, overlooking the beautiful village of South Milford. The farm borders the Charles River, where there is good boating and fishing. Fairview House was built by a prominent physician for a hospital, but has been remodeled into a summer resort. It is only 30 miles from Boston, on the N.Y. N.H. & H. R.R.; trains leave the South Station 8:30 A.M. and 3:43 P.M. Cars stop at the farm. Fare 72 cents by steam, by electric, by So. Framingham, 35 cents. Five minutes walk to farm. Fairview House stands in the midst of beautiful shade trees, including Pine, Ash, Mulberry and stately Elms, has broad piaza, pine groves, beautiful walks and drives, good R.F.D. mail service, five minutes walk to post office, church, store and electrics. Table supplied with all the fresh milk, cream, butter, eggs, chicken and vegetables and all the country luxuries raised on a farm.

Makes the sick well and the well stronger. Pure water, cool breezes and airy rooms, makes the hottest day enjoyable. Hot and cold water, with bath and all the home comforts and privileges of country enjoyment, with games.

Come to the country, for God made the country and man made the city.

"Ah peace walks down the winding path that leads home from the hill;

Her presence with a tranquil joy, with comfort my heart fills;

Assurance of love divine comes stealing to my breast;

I seem to hear Him say, I give to my beloved rest."

Don't be deceived, come to a real farm where there are all the animals as on a well kept farm not simply a boarding house where everything is bought from the market.

Terms: $6.00 to $7.00 per week. Special rates for families . .

The Fairview House originally the Corbett and Scammel home.

Times Have Changed

In the mid-1700's a monthly stage line ran from Boston to New York and passed through Bellingham on the old Hartford Turnpike, known now as Hartford Avenue.

This coach took four weeks round trip, and there were inns along the route, about a mile apart, where hungry and tired passengers would stop for a good hot meal and a night's lodging. Some of these buildings are still standing.

On the corner of Hartford Avenue and North Main Street there was a stable where the stages stopped to change their tired horses for fresh ones, the passengers would freshen up in the house across the street, which still stands (The Forbes House) . This operation took a half hour or more.

Today, on this same corner stands modern gas stations. In less than 10 minutes you can have your tank filled with gas, get oil if needed, have your windshield cleaned and be in New York in a few hours.

Corner of Hartford Avenue and North Main Street. 1969 — The Forbes House

Stephen and Edgar Scott standing in front of dairy with milk delivery wagon. Scott Hill Road was named after this prominent family.

Imagine riding to school in this on a snowy day. This school barge was driven by Eldred Wentzel from Hartford Ave. to Center School.

Would you believe this was location of Wethersfield?

What Are Small Towns Made Of?

One of the largest towns in area in the state, land in Bellingham covers 18.5 square miles. The town lies on the western border of Norfolk County with its southern end bordering Rhode Island. Its Center is thirty miles from Boston, twenty from Providence, and twenty from Worcester, the three cities which are at the corners of "The Golden Triangle" with Bellingham pinpointed as the "Dreamed-of" industrial center.

Near its Center is Saddleback Hill, part of the watershed between the Charles and Blackstone River Valleys. South Main Street runs over Scott Hill and the western border of Peter's River in the South of town. Towards the middle of Peter's River is Silver Lake, farther down and a little above Rakeville is Jenckes' Reservoir while South of the reservoir is Bungay Brook, coming from Wrentham in the East.

Franklin borders the eastern edge of town. In this area, near Bald Hill, there was a well known mineral spring, once a natural resort for the Red Men Indians. The Charles River, flowing from Hopkinton and Milford, enters through Bellingham's northwest corner, turning east at the center of town to form Box Pond. Beaver Pond flows in at this point also. Flowing east for two miles, it then runs north cutting off almost a third of the town's surface from the rest. Most of this section was Rawson's farm.

Stall Brook flows from Milford into the Charles at North Bellingham. At the last two falls in the river are North Bellingham and Caryville, the latter bordering Medway and Franklin. Lake Hiawatha, in the southwest, which lies one third in Blackstone and two thirds in Bellingham, is considered by many to be the most beautiful body of water in town. At one time, this area was called Cranberry Meadow and consisted solely of marsh lands and bogs, until the Lawton Spinning Company of Woonsocket dammed the area to create more water supply, through the adjoining Mill River, for their own use. Several roads were later built. Before 1940, only a few summer cottages surrounded the lake compared to the several hundred cottages and year-round homes surrounding it today.

ROADS AND TRANSPORTATION

To travel from one end of town to the other, one begins at the northeast corner (Medway) and follows Hartford Avenue for three miles, then North Main Street to the Center, South Main Street to Crooks' Corner and then one mile on Pulaski Boulevard to Woonsocket, at the southwest corner. Hartford Avenue is the oldest street in town, laid out in 1670 from Medfield to Mendon, it was a part of the middle road from Boston to Hartford, Conn. It was incorporated as a turnpike about 1796, and people paid a toll to use it; one toll house was located between Grove St. and the Donald Varney House. Partridge town was on Farm Street where Route 495 crosses, Crimpville was on High Street, above where it meets North Main, (the name coming from the process of shaping the legs of boots, carried on here in town before the Civil War), Four Corners are formed by the crossing of Maple and Mechanic Streets, near the Franklin line and Rand's crossing was located near the town dump where the railroad crosses Center Street by Railroad and Park Streets.

Trolley on Maple Street

In the early 1900's there were two lines of electric cars, the longer one from Caryville to Woonsocket and the other from Franklin to Milford. Both met at Four Corners every hour. The town was also crossed by three steam railroads; one from Boston, through Medway Vill-

South Milford Depot at tracks running across Hartford Avenue.

Crooks corner in 1890: Hotel which Jeremiah Crooks and wife Anna kept from 1834 to 1869. The stage coaches going between Worcester and Providence stopped there.

age to Woonsocket with local stations in Caryville, North Bellingham and Bellingham Junction (Depot St.); a small track from Franklin to Milford and the third from Boston to Willimantic, Connecticut running through South Bellingham.

In 1919, two residents had telephones in the Franklin exchange, five in Medway, sixteen in Milford and thirty-seven in Woonsocket. In 1969 Bellingham had its own telephone exchange with 2950 subscribers.

There are six cemeteries in town. North Bellingham, mentioned in a deed as "the burying place", was used as far back as 1718, one year before the town was incorporated. South Cemetery, on Center Street is across from the town dump. In 1778, on land given by Jonathan Thompson and David Jones, the Center Cemetery on Mechanic Street was formed. The Scammel Cemetery on Depot Street had eighteen stones in 1919, the earliest dated 1839. Rakeville Cemetery, on the Lake Street Extension was established in or about 1830. When Precious Blood Cemetery in Woonsocket was partially washed away in 1955 by hurricane floods, many graves were moved to a new cemetery on Wrentham Road, known as St. Jean de'Baptiste Cemetery.

Caryville in the early 1900's
Hartford Ave. — looking West from corner of Beech St.

At corner of route 140 and 126 now the site of a Texaco service station.

Persons of Public Interest

HISTORY'S FIRST WOMAN SOLDIER ENLISTS IN BELLINGHAM

Deborah Sampson, the only woman in Washington's Army and as far as is known, the only woman ever to enlist as a man for active service in any war in the United States, was born in Plymton in 1760. At 8 years old, Deborah was "farmed out" and went to live in Middleboro, Mass. At the age of 20, Deborah borrowed masculin clothing and found that she could walk along familiar streets undetected. Soon a daring dream of becoming a soldier was born within her.

In April of 1781 dressed in man's clothing and calling herself Robert Shurtleff, the first and middle names of her elder brother, Deborah enlisted in the Army. She enlisted in Bellingham, was mustered in in Worcester, Massachusetts and joined the regular Army at West Point.

Deborah is said to have served in all engagements in which the Fourth Massachusetts Regiment took part; she was at Tarrytown and is said to have witnessed the surrender of Cornwallis. Twice wounded at Tarrytown, it was a hospital doctor who discovered her sex and sent her to General Patterson. The stalwart soldier, who had so many times before faced death, fainted at the commander's feet when asked if she were really a female in man's clothing.

As a Sargeant, she received a general discharge from the Army. After a time, she married Benjamin Gannett and had two daughters. At the age of 68, Deborah died April 29, 1827 and is buried in Rockridge Cemetery in Sharon, Mass.

John Albee, 1833-1915, was the town's literary man. A graduate of Harvard Divinity School in 1858, he married while a teacher and preacher in western Massachusetts. He and his wife, who was a nurse established a remarkable charitable hospital in Boston. He wrote books of poetry and imagination and edited the Portsmouth, N. H. daily paper.

His "Confessions of Boyhood" is an imaginative autobiography, with pictures of life in Bellingham long ago.

Alexander Scammel, 1747 - 1781, graduated from Harvard in 1769. He was a school teacher in Plymouth and Kingston. He studied law with General Sullivan in New Hampshire. He helped General Sullivan capture a fort near Portsmouth, ammunition from which was used at Bunker Hill. Scammel served as a Major in Cambridge in 1776. The following year he took command of the first New Hampshire regiment at Ticonderoga, and was wounded in the first fight with Burgoyne. The following winter he became Adjutant General of the American Army, and he held that office until 1781.

At his own request, he was given command of light infantry of the Army used in the vicinity of New York and Virginia with the French Army. During the seige of Yorktown, he was mortally wounded. Cornwallis allowed him to be carried to Williamsburg, where he died. He is one of the officers in the painting of Burgoyne's surrender in the rotunda of the Capital at Washington.

John M. Thayer, 1820-1906. His home was near the site of the first Church in the center of the town. He graduated from Brown University in 1841 and studied law in Worcester. He was admitted to the bar in Omaha, built the first frame house there and became interested in politics. For six years, he was an Indian fighter. The Territorial legislature made him a brigadier general till the Civil War.

As a Colonel, in 1860, he raised a full regiment of one thousand Nebraska men from a population of twenty-eight hundred and forty-one. He served as brigadier general of volunteers with Grant and Sherman and resigned as major general in July, 1865. That same year he was elected one of the first United States Senators from Nebraska serving six years. In 1875, President Grant appointed him Governor of Wyoming where he spent four years. He was elected Governor of Nebraska for two terms and held office five years. In 1892, he retired to private life.

Mrs. Marion A. White, born April 2, 1877, is a descendent of many of the early settlers and a resident of South Bellingham for many years.

She has had enough interesting experiences to fill a book and many long walks through snow and bad weather in order to get to her job.

Mrs. Marion A. White at work.

During the hurricane of September 1938, Mrs. White stayed at her post in the Providence Journal Building taking care of the teletype machines; throughout the night marooned by the tidal wave.

Fred Peterson, formerly of Bellingham, has achieved international recognition as a painter of exceptional landscape scenes as well as a lecturer on the art of painting. His fame was reached by the use of the palette knife instead of the brush method in painting. He is a former member of the First Baptist Church of Bellingham and was baptized by Rev. Clarence Chamberlain in Mendon, April 10, 1932. His wife is also a former member.

Through the efforts of Ann Parker and Avon Neal, a gravestone in the North Bellingham Cemetery has achieved national recognition. The Stone of "Miss Polly Coombes" states that she passed away Nov. 16, 1795 at the age of 25. "Rubbings" of this stone have been shown on TV and is to be found in libraries of Harvard, Smithsonian Institution, Library of Congress, at least five in New York and many others. It has appeared in Look magazine and many others.

The Neals have done "rubbings" all over the world and have been aided in their research by two Ford Foundation Fellowships. Articles written by them are numerous with photos taken by Mrs. Neal, professional photographer.

Major exhibitions have been shown since 1961 in many places including London, England. Bellingham is indebted to this charming couple for taking this humble gravestone and giving it a place in history to be seen by a vast audience.

Miss Polly Coombe's tombstone at North Bellingham Cemetery.

BELLINGHAM'S CONTRIBUTION TO BENEDICT COLLEGE

Bathsheba Barber was born March 16, 1809 in Bellingham. At the age of 21, when she married Captain Stephen Benedict, a wealthy industrialist, they moved to Pawtucket, Rhode Island.

After her husband was killed in a fire that destroyed his business, Mrs. Benedict, in 1870 founded Benedict College, a coeducational four year liberal arts institution located in Columbia, South Carolina. Benedict is a private college related to the Baptist Church. Bathsheba Benedict not only purchased the site for the college but left a $100,000 endowment to the college named in honor of her husband.

Up until 1968 when the college merged with Mather school, Benedict had an enrollment that exceeded 1,100; faculty and staff members numbering 130, and 26 academic and residence buildings. Four modern dormitories were constructed after 1960 and a new $750,000 science building was opened in February of 1967.

Indications are that Bathsheba, who died June 30, 1897 and is buried in Swan Point Cemetery in Providence, R. I., was the daughter of Hamlet and Bathsheba Barber, who are two of the five persons entombed in the vault in North Bellingham. Hamlet Barber was a town selectman in 1829.

Vault in North Bellingham Cemetery

William T. Adams (1822-1897) — Contrary to biographies previously written in the town's history and other reference books, William Adams was not born in North Bellingham. The pioneer story writer for young people was born in Medway near Gormley's Corner. Adams, who wrote under the pen name of "Oliver Optic", read his stories on numerous occasions in the hall in North Bellingham.

In May 1919, two persons from neighboring towns were killed in an auto by the railroad train that crossed near Debbie's Steak House. Mrs. Elizabeth Foley was also killed at the North Bellingham crossing in the same month.

Did you realize that Bellingham does not have a Main Street?

The first telegraph office in town was established in Bellingham Center in 1880.

After an outbreak of small pox in 1776, the town voted: "Whereas some people think they have small pox, the constable is to impress the house of John Coombs for a small pox hospital. The selectmen are to provide a doctor and nurse. Each person to pay, on leaving one week after innoculation, $8., or $7. if they boarded themselves. Also voted that the town forbids any person from having the small pox in the house of Daniel Penniman or Silas Penniman except for Silas who is so bad that it is dangerous to remove him, and if any person or persons shall be so presumptious as to have the small pox in either of those houses they shall forfeit to the town ten pounds to be recovered of them by the town treasurer."

Less than twenty years later, the town refused to provide a house for small pox innoculations: "The Town disapproves of the small pox coming into Town contrary to law."

In Memoriam

AS LISTED IN TOWN REPORTS 1919 - 1967

ORVILLE C. RHODES 1919
Committee for Publication of Bellingham History
Chairman of Board of Assessors

PERCY CLIFTON BURR 1926
Selectman
Clerk of the Board
Overseer of the Poor
Town Clerk

WARREN FAIRBANKS 1926
Town Moderator
Selectman
Overseer of the Poor Chairman
Represented town in legislature

HENRY W. PICKERING 1928
Town Official
Civil War Veteran

PERCY GOLDTHWAITE, JR. 1928
Finance Committee

REV. WILLIAM HENRY DAVENPORT 1929
Doctor of Dental Surgery
Graduated Newton Theological Institute 1891
Ordained — Lecturer
Mass. State Board of Agriculture

CARROLL E. WHITE 1929
Selectman
School Committee
Overseer of the Poor
Assessor
Inspector of Slaughtering, Animals and Milk

GEORGE GRANT 1932
First Fire Chief
Forest Fire Warden
Selectman

ARTHUR MARTEL 1932
Finance Committee man at inception
Library Building Committee

JOSEPHAT O. BERNIER 1936
Town Moderator
World War Veteran

HIRAM E. CROOKS 1936
Selectman
Board of Public Welfare

FRANK HOAR 1936
Assessor

EDWARD H. THAYER 1936
Board of Public Welfare

ADDISON E. BULLARD 1938
School Committeeman
Selectman
State Representative
Town History Committee

GRANVILLE N. DOUGLAS 1940
School Committeeman

PROCTOR P. COOKE 1940
Road Commissioner

WALTER E. COOKE 1942
Selectman

OLIVA DULUDE 1942
Selectman

LEWIS E. WHITNEY 1945
Tree Warden
Cemetery Committee

ARMAND H. LAPRADE 1949
Selectman
Water Commissioner

Timothy E. Foley 1950
School Committeeman
Assessor
Selectman
Highway Superintendent

Albert A. Boudreau 1950
School Committeeman

Walter H. Thayer 1951
Tax Collector
Town Treasurer

Roy E. Adams 1952
Welfare Board

Melvin Graves 1952
Clerk of Board of Selectmen

Paul Robidoux 1953
Deputy to Chief of Police
Selectman
Superintendent of Water Systems
Construction Committee

James E. Wrenn 1958
Veterans Agent
Memorial Day Committeeman

Romeo A. Carrier 1959
Selectman
Board of Public Welfare
Highway Superintendent
Water Department Superintendent

Edwin F. Tuttle 1959
Town Moderator
ERA Administrator
Founder and Admiral Bellingham Navy Yard

Alered Pouliot 1960
Selectman
Welfare Board
Police Chief

Ernest E. Belcher 1961
Fire Lieutenant since founding
Sealer of Weights and Measures

Wilfred Arcand Sr. 1962
Highway Superintendent
Board of Public Welfare
Planning Board

George Berardi 1963
Constable

A. Timothy Harper 1963
Plumbing Inspector

James J. Keough 1963
Local Teacher for 19 years
South School Principal
High School Principal

Omer T. Harpin 1964
Police Officer
Sargeant on Force

Marion P. Norman 1964
Postmistress

Edmond O. Grenier 1964
Fire Department Member

Lyndon F. Murray 1964
Fire Department Member
Lieutenant on Force

Andor DeJony 1965
Town Moderator
Finance Committeeman

Clifford G. Dever 1965
Housing Authority Investigation Committeeman

Francis J. Flynn 1965
Local Teacher and Coach
Assistant Principal
Athletic Director

Joseph W. Dalpe 1966
Planning Board Member

Stanley E. Chase 1966
Telephone Study Committeeman

Euclide A. Fleuette 1967
Policeman since 1933
Police Chief 30 years

200th Anniversary and Welcome Home Day 1919

Two reception parties were held in May and June and plans made for a Welcome Home Day on September 27, 1919 for World War I Veterans.

An Honor Roll and service flag was provided. Town buildings were decorated and a band stand erected.

Son of Edward Spencer to whom the monument was dedicated.

At 2 P.M. a parade was held. "Our boys" were escorted by a band and school children marched around the monument, located in front of the Town Hall, then to the band stand, which was in front of the Center School. With the servicemen seated in front, addresses were made and a service flag unfurled. One of the principal speakers was Senator David I. Walsh, a popular national figure. During the afternoon, exercises were held in the church to commemorate the 200th anniversary of our town, many enjoyed sporting events and a good time was had by all.

A banquet was served at 6 P.M. in the Town Hall. Everyone enjoyed having the opportunity to show their appreciation for the sacrifices these young men had made. Dancing until 11:30 and a fireworks display put the final touches on a most pleasant day.

Enough money was solicited to pay all bills incurred and a balance of $93.99 was presented to the Edward A. Spencer Post of the American Legion in our town.

All school children at Memorial Day exercises 1923

The Rotatori Family's contribution to World War I

Some Older Homes in Bellingham

George Whiting, So. Main St.

Joseph Chamberlain, Brook St.

John Curley, Hartford Ave.

The Churches of Bellingham

THE TOWN CHURCH

Like other new towns, the only way Bellingham settlers could have their petition for a township granted would be to incorporate through a town church. (Congregational). This irated Baptists and Quakers in the area but it had to be made part of the petition which thirty-two of forty family heads signed.

Dedham consented to allow Bellingham to seek incorporation on May 11, 1719. It was incorporated without a corporate charter on November 27, 1719. It was the last town to do so in Norfolk County.

A meeting house was built three years later, but finding and keeping a minister became a problem. Church support and that of its minister became a controversial issue.

The church struggled for existence for almost thirty years. In view of this, the General Court incorporated the West Parish of Medway in 1750 and Bellingham was no longer required to support a church of its own.

The town church continued a feeble life, without support by law, until 1756 but was disbanded in the same year.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

For many years Baptists of Bellingham traveled to Swansea, Mass., first location of the Baptist Church in Massachusetts and fourth in America.

In 1736, eight Bellingham Baptists were baptized there and the following year they subscribed to a church covenant in Mendon along with seven other men.

Nicholas Cook kept the church books. He was called a deacon. The first meeting house was built on land, today known as High Street, given in 1744 by Elnathan Wight, the church's first pastor.

A debt of gratitude must be given Captain Myles Standish. Had he not sent John to Priscilla, there may never have been a Noah Alden, who became minister in 1766. He was a member of the Massachusetts Convention to frame the Constitution and he was also a member of the convention to ratify the new Constitution of the United States. Alden, who passed away May 5, 1797, made his home at the corner of North Main and Taunton Streets.

The Town Hall was built in 1802 for free religious services. Nine years later the Baptist Society, with seventy-seven members, was incorporated by the legislature. The following year, however, the church was reorganized by a council and had twenty-four members. The present church building was built in 1826.

As far as is known, there is only one hundwritten manuscript of "The Old Oaken Bucket" by the author, Samuel Woodworth. This copy, presented to Brown University, was written in the Bellingham parsonage of Rev. Nehemiah Lovell, prior to 1842. This building, on Mendon Street, is now owned by Mr. Thomas Heavey.

In 1833, the church bell, still used weekly, "was cast by G. H. Holbrook of Bogastow, now Millis. He was an apprentice of Paul Revere.

James P. Berkeley, oldest living former pastor, is now in his ninetieth year.

Rev. William W. Wakeman (1911-1916) did a great deal to gather all of the church records from its beginning in 1737. Through his leadership, the 175th anniversary of the church witnessed the placing of a boulder on High Street to indicate the place where the first Baptist Church building was erected. Selectman David Jones and Town Clerk Henry A. Whitney represented the town at this event.

In 1914, electric lights were installed in the present building.

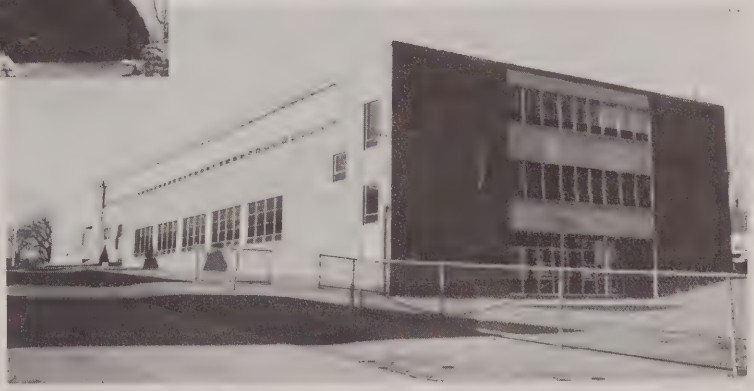
The Rev. Emma J. C. Park, first woman to be ordained into the Baptist ministry in Massachusetts, became pastor on September 5, 1919. The church's interior was redecorated in 1922 and the first woman missionary, from the church, Miss Helen Hadley, left for Nicaraugua the

First Baptist Church

St. Brendan's Church

North Bellingham Baptist Church

St. Blaise Church



Assumption Church

following year. A biography entitled, "The Fool and I" depicting an era prior to the Civil War and into the twentieth century was written by her.

From 1926 to 1927, the Rev. Alfred Murray served as pastor. He was a noted author of religious books and from 1928 to 1929, the Rev. William H. Davenport conveyed cheer to all and lectured in local schools. He was killed November 16, 1929 by a train at the Railroad Street crossing.

The Rev. Clarence E. Chamberlain was pastor during the 200th anniversary of the church (1937). Mrs. Chamberlain wrote a history, the first since Rev. Abial Fisher's in 1922. In 1939 lightning struck the steeple and did some damage inside the church. Fortunately no fire resulted.

The second woman to serve in our church was the Rev. Mildred B. Palmer. The interior was again redecorated, a new organ was purchased and the basement was made into a hall. A new exit door was installed in 1953. Deacon Forsberg made small wooden crosses from the lumber removed and distributed them to the congregation. Two were sent to President and Mrs. Dwight D. Eisenhower. In 1957 souvenier replicas of the door were made by Mr. Forsberg and given to the church people when the center front door was replaced.

A new parsonage was constructed on South Main Street in 1961 and a family from Indonesia was sponsored jointly by our church and the Baptist Church in North Bellingham. The 225th anniversary of the church in 1962 filled a year with many outstanding events. A huge banquet on December 3rd climaxed the celebration. The church's exterior was painted in 1965. For three weeks in that same year, church services were transmitted over W.M.R.C. Radio in Milford. On December 12, 1965, a farewell testimonial was given to Rev. Palmer and her husband. Many town officials participated. The honor of being Pastor Emeritis was conferred upon her and the Rev. Ralph Palmer was made an honorary member of the church.

The present incumbent, Rev. Godfrey Parker came to us in August of 1966.

NORTH BELLINGHAM BAPTIST CHURCH

The North Bellingham Baptist Society, a small group of Christians, led by Varnum J. Bates, met regularly for services in the room over the grocery store on Maple Street owned and operated by Bates and Noah J. Arnold, now Olbry's Store.

To meet the needs for better accommodations, Bates and Arnold, proprietors of the woolen mill in the village, erected a building on Hartford Avenue to be used by the Church.

The hall was dedicated as a chapel on October 19, 1847, the first pastor being Reverend Mr. Converse.

In October of 1867, the society constituted a church to be known as the North Bellingham Baptist Church. The present church building on Hartford Avenue was built on land donated by Deacon D. A. King and dedicated on March 12, 1908.

Through the years it has served the community as the only Protestant church in this section of Bellingham. For this reason it functions as a community church, extending a warm welcome to all, regardless of their denominational affiliation. At the same time the church maintains membership in the American Baptist Convention.

In recent years the church has purchased the houses on either side of their building previously owned by David King and Stanley Kolowski.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCHES

New England history states there were probably less than 200 Catholics in Massachusetts in 1780, 720 in Boston by 1810 and about a dozen in Milford by 1832. Marriages and Baptisms were first performed in Boston and later in Woonsocket. Burials were in Blackstone.

Bellingham Catholics attended services in Franklin and Milford until the Medway Church was built. The Rev. Thomas B. Louney, Rector of the Medway Church, realized the need of a church in North Bellingham and built St. Brendan's Church in 1888 on the Pelatiah Smith Estate.

St. Brendan's was dedicated and held its first service on September 8, 1893. For 50 years, priests came weekly from Medway to offer Mass until 1945 when St. Brendan's became an independent parish.

Assumption Parish in South Bellingham, actually the first to be established in town, was dedicated September 23, 1927. During the summer months of the first year, Sunday services were held in a large tent where the parking area is today. The first church was previously a garage owned by the Trottier family who today operate the Trottier Express Co. in town.

The present Chapel and school on Moody Street was dedicated in May, 1961.

St. Blaise Parish was established in April of 1962. Situated in Bellingham Center, it was comprised of portions of St. Brendan's Parishioners in the North and the Assumption Parish in the South.

A TALE FROM THE OLD PARSONAGE

One fine spring morning just as day was breaking, Virginia Wakeman, daughter of the Rev. William W. Wakeman, former pastor of the Center Baptist Church, awoke early and stealthily crept downstairs, took the milk pail and silently went out to the barn before the rooster had time to announce the start of a new day. Hurriedly she proceeded to milk the family cow much to the surprise of the kindly animal. After extracting every available drop of nutritious fluid, she hurried into the house and emptied the pail in another container. She was careful to remove every trace of her deed as she replaced the pail in its usual place and returned to bed quietly.

Later, when the household showed signs of life, she watched her father go out to the barn to perform his daily chores! Placing the pail in the proper position for milking he started the process of getting the much needed liquid but, to his consternation, nothing came out! This was something new to him after all of these years and with a worried look on his face he hastily went into the house to prepare a medicant for the supposedly ailing animal. Having the medicine ready, he glanced at a very happy, smiling face on the mischievous Virginia who thereupon shouted with childish glee, "April Fool"! It was the first day of April. Collecting his composure, the noble father joined in the merriment of the occasion with thanks that it was not more serious and a delightful ending ensued.

ODDITIES AND HUMOROUS NOTES

In 1669, King Philip received twenty-two pounds eight shillings for land which became the principal part of our town.

Governor Bellingham never visited Bellingham.

January 4, 1692, Dedham selectmen examined land and reported that "land neer Mendham (Blackstone was than a part of Mendon) and Wrentham is not worth ye laying out in a Devident." (for division)

Taken from Dedham Transcript newspaper dated January 23, 1875: "To Invalids — New York Lager Bier (beer) Put up in pint bottles for family use. Single bottles, 15 cents; by the case (two dozen bottles), $2.25, delivered free. Orders may be left at the Post Office.

A sample of grocery prices in 1875 were: Best English Tea per pound — 60¢, Best Java Coffee per pound — 41¢, Rising Sun Stove Polish — 70¢, Sirloin Steak per pound — 27¢, Imported Castile Soap per pound — 15¢, quart of Pea Beans — 10¢ and one pound of best butter — 42¢.

January, 1867 brought such a snowstorm, steam cars did not run for a week.

A lockup for vagrants was built in 1875 (behind the Town Hall) and was kept well filled for some years. It later became entirely unnecessary.

The Caryville Post Office was first established as the Fairbanks Post Office on November 22, 1865 and changed to its present name in January 1866.

"Birds in Heaven"

In the late 1800's, there was a custom in the Center Baptist Church, its interior pictured above, that would appear peculiar today.

Suspended from the sides of both balconies of the sanctuary were bird cages in which song birds were placed. They joined in the service with their throats of song and chirping.

The joy of entering church to the sound of "Birds in Heaven", as it were, has been recalled. The nostalgia of these things bring to mind a tranquility that subdues the haste of present day living with its rush to go nowhere.

Bellingham - Old and New

Town Hall erected 1802
Used for Town Business and Baptist Church Services.
Center Building: Lock-up erected 1875.
Two-room Massey School erected 1873.
(Remodeled to present size 1901)

Lower Picture: Same angle with modern Fire and Police Station erected 1965.

THE MILLS OF BELLINGHAM

From 1719 to 1819, most all town inhabitants were farmers. In later years, however, townspeople produced more through manufacturing than they did on the farms, though farming remained their chief occupation.

Wool and cotton comprised three quarters of goods produced in the 20th Century.

Early Industrial Reports reveal the following:

1784 Industry was limited to two sawmills owned by John Metcalf and John Corbet.

1800 A sawmill and a grist mill on the Charles River were owned by Joseph Fairbanks.

1810 The first mill to manufacture fabrics in town was located in the North.

THE NORTH MILL

In 1787, Beverly, Mass. became the home of the first cotton mill in the U. S. Twenty-three years later in 1810 the first building of the North Bellingham Mill was built by Joseph Ray, a young stone mason from Blackstone. In the years following it grew in size and changed hands many times. In 1864 Joseph Ray's three sons bought it back for $16,500 and kept it operating for 35 years. In 1899 the brothers Ray sold the mill and another in Franklin to the American Woolen Co., for $100,000. During the first World War it operated 24 hours a day filling government contracts.

Thru the years many small industries have occupied the buildings at the mill. Today, six companies are in business.

Company	Product
Lang Manufacturing	baby pants
Thomas Millinery	ladies' hats
Scandia Inc.	custom kitchens
Granite State	lawnmowers
Bellingham Fibers	woolen material
Micro Cast	electronic casting

THE CARYVILLE MILL

The second mill in town was started in 1813 by Joseph Fairbanks. Mr. Fairbanks was a great grandson of George Fairbanks the first settler of Bogastow (Millis) who, with his neighbors, built the famous stone house as refuge against the Indians during King Philips War.

William Cary bought the mill from his father-in-law, Fairbanks, in 1848. In the sixteen years he owned it, he rebuilt and enlarged it; and also built three tenement houses. In thirty of his sixty successful business years, he produced from $75,000. to $100,000. worth of goods annually.

The local postoffice, built in 1866, was named after him. During World War I this mill ran on a 24 hour basis producing supplies of silk yarn for cartridge bags.

Since 1965, the mill has been operated by the Roaring Brook Spinning Corporation, manufacturers of woolen and synthetic yarns. The business employs sixty people.

THE RED MILL

In the mid 1800's, cloth manufacturing began on the Charles River, above the North Bellingham Mill. Dwight Colburn, born in Dedham in 1798, was the owner. At one time, he employed sixty men. Mr. Colburn worked in his father's business as a boy and continued that business in Holliston and Bellingham, at the Red Mill. He also had boot factories in this town and in Milford.

In 1841 he sold the factory and all connected property for $2500. to Bates and Arnold, owners of the North Bellingham Mill.

Sluiceway and portions of cellar walls still stand at the end of Mill Street, off North Main Street, in the center of town.

The North Bellingham Mill located on Maple Street.

The Caryville Mill about 1870 with the tenter bars for stretching and drying cloth.

1. Boot Shop
2. Francis Metcalf
3. Calvin Fairbanks
4. Edwin Fairbanks
5. Wm. Fairbanks
6. C. H. Cutler
7. Mill

The Red Mill in 1852.

THE CHILSON FACTORY

In the early 1800's there was a small cotton factory in the area of Hoag Lake, which is now Silver Lake, on Peters River.

William Chilson had bought three cow common rights in this land bounded at the north by the Charles River and at the south by Attleboro and the Pawtucket River, now Blackstone River in 1699. At this time there was no town of Bellingham.

Martin Chilson, owner of the factory, employed twelve persons.

However, in 1834, because of bankruptcy, he was forced to surrender to trustees, Rita Scott and Paul Chilson, for a number of creditors: "two houses, two barns, the cotton house, blacksmith shop, shed etc., with about ninety acres where he lived, with water power and all his personal property, fire engine, two horses, chaise, broadcloths, calicoes, goods in his store, unfinished wagons, hay, tools, furniture, etc., together with a claim on the American Insurance Company for a fire in his factory."

SOUTH MILFORD FACTORY

In 1755 Dr. John Corbett sought to build a dam and sawmill in Bellingham but was refused. The first mill in Mendon, then almost 100 years old, was located on the same road hardly a mile away. In 1812 land on both sides of the Charles River was sold by Corbett's great grandson, Dr. Scammell III, to Penniman Scammell and Company. The firm employed eleven persons. Major Samuel Penniman, son of landlord Sam Penniman, who kept a tavern opposite the Green Store in South Milford, was at its head. The Major was born in 1773 and died in 1845. Besides his woolen business he collected straw braid for miles around from housewives to make bonnets in his factory.

"The Bellingham Woolen and Cotton Manufactory" is mentioned in a history of this industry as one of the earliest to be incorporated by the state. It was located on the Bellingham side of the Charles River at the Bellingham-Mendon town line on Hartford Avenue.

The Mill had two sets of machinery in 1837 and made twenty-four thousand yards annually.

In 1840, following the panic of 1837, Moses Whiting of Milton took over control of the mill due to a judgement against the company. He kept the mill for almost twenty years, selling it to Chilson and Fisk of Milford in 1859 who resold it the following year to Thayer and Sweet of Hopkinton. The Mill burned down in 1868.

The pond is called Factory Pond on old maps.

RAKEVILLE

The area around Jenks Reservoir, in the south end of town, was once commonly known as Rakeville. Gerard O. Wilcox, who settled here in 1848, made rakes and forks. His business grew to include cards for woolen mills and a variety of agricultural tools. He drew customers from many countries. One year his products grossed $18,000. with the aid of twenty employees.

At this same time, rowboats were being built by Harvey Grant and Adams Barber Jr. in a small tannery on Peters River at Crooks Corner.

This area was also called Mechanicsville as is verified on authentic maps used in the 1858 period.

Perkins Handkerchief Shop in 1907 located at 1969 site of Assumption Church parking lot.

THE BOOT INDUSTRY

A large amount of boots and shoes were produced in the middle and late 1800's. At one time there were four boot and shoe factories operating.

From 1848 to 1874, Edwin and William Fairbanks, whose houses still stand in Caryville, made "boots for western trade". In one year 7000 cases at 12 pairs a case were put out by workmen. In 1864 more Bellingham men worked on boots than at any other occupation.

The town lost a great deal with the death of William Fairbanks, his brother Edwin having sold out years before. Executors of the estate tried to continue the business but on July 25, 1875, the factory burned down and was a complete loss.

In the late 1800's, freight cars carrying barrels of animal hoofs were unloaded at Rand's Crossing and taken, by horse and wagon, to Barber's Glue Factory. Glue was used in sizing in the manufacturing of cloth in Woonsocket factories. Today, this building is located at the back of Warren Whiting's home, on South Main Street as an extension.

BOX POND MILL

In the late '30's E. P. Hebert of Woonsocket built a large modern Manufacturing plant at Box Pond and conducted the Blackstone Wool Combing Company there for a few years.

The Winslow Leather Company and Tilton Tanning Company bought the property around 1955 for the business of curing and processing hides.

Armour Leather Company, Winslow Leather Division was the next occupant of the building. Up to this time the plant had steady employment for many Bellinghamites, even during some periods on a second shift. After a few years of prosperity foreign-made tannery substitutes, at a much lower price, forced the mill to become idle and to be put on the market for sale. During the period 1960-65 the mill was stripped of machinery.

In 1969 three companies occupy the building.

Teachman-Perry Machine Company, formerly of Woonsocket for 50 years, employs nine men and specializes in the milling of heavy machinery which is sold primarily on the eastern seaboard.

Benzanoid Organics Inc. came from Attleboro in 1966 and manufactures dyestuffs for intermediate cloth, rugs, etc. They employ seventeen people.

Organic Chemical Corporation, established in 1967, is the sales agency, primarily for Benzanoid Organics products and employs three people.

William Fairbank's boot shop in Caryville.

Bellingham Post Offices

Through the years, no records have been kept of Post Office sites or of the dates they were established. There have been numerous Post Masters in the town's history, some of those with outstanding records are listed below.

Thayer's General Store which housed Center Post Office until 1954.

BELLINGHAM CENTER –

Wright Curtis was the first Post Master in the Center of town. His term began in the year 1823. The Post Office's first known location was in a home now owned by Emerson Eldredge, opposite the First Baptist Church. It was later relocated in the grocery store owned by L. F. Thayer and Sons. Ruel S. Thayer was appointed Post Master in February, 1915, and retired after 42 years of service on June 30, 1957. Marion P. Norman succeeded him in a new building, adjacent to Thayer's market, which was dedicated in 1954. She remained until her death in 1964. Today, the Post Office is located on North Main Street, it was opened in July of 1967. As yet, no permanent Post Master has been named.

North Bellingham Post Office on Maple St.

IN THE NORTH –

The North Bellingham Post Office has always been located in the same building; once owned by Ernest Camp, on Maple St., and today houses Olbry's Variety and Package Store. Milton Z. Bullard became the first Post Master in 1850. Mr. Camp took the position on March 13, 1911. Mrs. Mary E. Forbes is the present postmistress.

Caryville Post Office for a time was in the Railroad Station on Pearl St.

In Caryville, the Post Office began in 1866 in the railroad depot on Pearl Street with David Lawrence as postmaster. It was later moved to a building on Hartford Ave. owned by the Camp brothers. Today's postmistress is Mrs. Dorothy Chase, who succeeded her husband Stanley after his death in 1966. Mr. Chase held the office for over twenty years.

Residents, north of the Center, who were not accommodated by the Post Offices at Caryville and North Bellingham, were reached by Medway Free Delivery Route #2, which handled approximately one hundred fifty mail boxes on a circuit of twenty-two and two tenths miles from Medway Village to Bellingham and Franklin.

AND IN THE SOUTH . . .

. . . a Post Office was kept in 1850 by Paul Chilson. At that time, an office in the Bald Hill section of Franklin handled mail for those residents in the Hoag Lake area. After a petition was signed in 1891, mail was delivered from Woonsocket to the south end covering an area of six and a half square miles. In 1919, the carrier covered two hundred twenty-two mail boxes in six long hours. Delivery was discontinued from this Rhode Island office with the opening of the new Post Office in Bellingham Center in 1967, when that Office's own carriers took over deliveries.

New Post Office at corner of North Main and Mill Streets.

Stories of Old Bellingham

"The Ghost Train"

Taken from YANKEE magazine and written by Francis D. Donovan

Little exists today of the New York and New England Railroad. There are still remnants of this main line that ran from Boston, through Walpole, Bellingham and Blackstone, Massachusetts; on into Putnam, Pomfret and Willimantic, Conn.

During its day, the New York and New England line had some great experiences. One of the most popular is the legend of "Gene Potter and the "Ghost Train".

Gene Potter, (Eugene Everett Potter) was known to have one of the fastest passenger trains in existence and at a relatively young age he was known as a "fast runner". Potter, commenting on his Engine 167, said, "She's a strong fast engine! By golly, she's just what we needed".

In 1884, the NY and N E RR under the brillant leadership of Charles P. Clark inauguarated a new fast train called the "New England Limited". This train operated between New York and Boston. From the very first day of operation, Gene Potter and the train both became a success. The run between New York and Boston was made in six hours. The 86 miles between Boston and Willimantic was non-stop with water taken in "on the fly" from track pans east of Putnam, Conn.

Gene Potter had a natural flair for showmanship and could command attention whereever he went without being a bore. He was always in demand for all types of speaking occasions.

Potter was a glamorous engineer, but with all his flair there were still storm clouds gathering. By 1890, despite all the President of the N Y and N E line could do, the line was being destroyed by the refusal of the New Haven R.R. for the entrance of the New England Line into New York City.

The result was of such frenzy that to recapture the passenger business, the line redesigned the "N.E. Limited" to the "White Train" on March 16, 1891.

The road overlooked no possibilities in making this change a signal event. The train was made up of seven of the "Pullman Palace Car Company's" finest rolling stock. There was the parlor and baggage car combination, royal buffet car, smoker, dining car, coaches, and parlor cars. All of the cars were painted white, and were equipped with Baker heaters and Pintch gas illumination. The parlor cars were fitted with velvet carpets, silk draperies and white silk curtains. The deep and comfortable chairs were upholstered in old gold plush. Full length plate glass mirrors were installed at each end of the cars, causing Potter to remark dryly, "There'll be bad luck to spare if we go off the iron and break all these mirrors . . . " He smiled, though, as he regarded himself in the glass; he wore a white duster, white cap, and white gloves. His fireman wore white overalls, and the train crew, under conductor Mike Crowley, wore white caps trimmed in gold.

General Passenger Agent A. C. Kendall handed out ivory and gold menu cards bearing poems.

Even with all this luxury it was up to Gene to make all this pay and meet the reduced time schedule of five hours and forty minutes.

It did not take long for the train to become known as the "Ghost Train" and even today when someone mentions the "Ghost Train" you naturally think of Gene.

The White Train was discontinued on October 19, 1895, and Potter took over the throttle of the "Air Line Limited," the White Train's successor.

Myth of the Bellingham Navy Yard

Nearly a century ago, there was a railroad that ran from the Cook Street Station in Boston to Woonsocket, R. I. Bellingham's well patronized station was on Depot Street, where the cement terminal is now.

To accommodate the people of Milford, a horse drawn barge ran daily from that town to the Depot Street station.

One cold, winter night, two Milford residents, having been to Woonsocket, perhaps over-indulging in liquid refreshments, boarded the last train from that city. In Bellingham they were more interested in sleeping than in taking the barge to Milford. They wandered, taking the woods road to Box Pond where Edgar Ray operated two steam sawmills. Finding shelter near the boilers, they laid down to pleasant dreams. No one disturbed their slumber as the next morning was Sunday. Once awakened, one rubbed his eyes and said, "Where in Blackstone" (or words to that effect)" are we? Are we in the Bellingham Navy Yard?" Pointed to logs lying crosswise from the piles, he asked, "Don't you see the guns?" This story was handed down from generation to generation as an absolute fact.

About sixty years ago, fifty or more sailors and workmen from the Charlestown Navy Yard came to Box Pond to hold their picnic and outing. They sent refreshments ahead in a horse drawn wagon. By nightfall, all were too happy to think of returning to Charlestown. They stayed there for two days until they were escorted back to their Navy Yard by a strong guard of naval police.

A third story involves the U. S. House of Representatives about the same time. Someone in the legislature, as a joke, proposed a bill for the appropriation of $100,000. for the Bellingham Navy Yard. The bill was near enactment when the hoax was discovered.

In 1939, Edwin Tuttle, father of David Tuttle, Sr. visited the home of Walter Hyden Thayer to discuss Masonry. The Navy Yard Story was repeated to Tuttle. He decided to form an association of Bellingham Masons and call it the Bellingham Navy Yard. He was named Admiral and Edward M. Taylor of Hopedale was secretary. Their first meeting was held April 27, 1939 in the Town Hall.

One outstanding event of the Navy Yard, was a Masonic Divine Worship on Mother's Day of 1942. It was sponsored by Constellation Lodge from Dedham; the Navy Yard and brethren of 14 lodges located in the original township of Dedham. Over 500 masons, escorted by Norwood Commandery and Alleppo Shrine band, marched from Masonic Temple in Dedham to the First Church Unitarian. After the services, three elm trees were planted on church grounds, site of first public school in America supported by public taxation.

In 1944 Divine Worship was held at Bellingham High School, now the Keough School, with Reverend Dr. Taylor, Deputy Grand Master and Acting Grand Master, as guest preacher. They planted twenty-one memorial trees. The Curate of Assumption Catholic Church participated and blessed the soil and trees. The soil, a blend from every state in the Union, was moistened by the water of the Mississippi River, sent by Senator Harry S. Truman, past Grand Master of Missouri. Greetings were received from Brother Franklin Delano Roosevelt, President of the United States.

Bellingham Navy Yard was an association of brethren of the Most Ancient and Honorable Society of Free and Accepted Masons. Its entire membership was composed wholly of Masons. Members came from 21 Grand Lodges in the U. S. and foreign countries. Nationally known members included: Estes Kefauver, Leverett Saltonstall and Lowell Thomas. Among the local persons who were members were: Ernest C. Jerrett, Lloyd A. Brown, Waldo I. Cook, Arthur C. Curtiss, Warren E. Whiting, Donald Varney, Clarence Varney, and David L. Tuttle. (It was the only Masonic Club or organization that had as its highest officer the President of the U. S.) Approximately 450 Masons, representing over 100 Blue Lodges, belonged to the Navy Yard.

With the death of Mr. Tuttle, the Navy Yard ceased to exist.

THE AVERY OXEN

Shown are thoroughbred Holsteins, almost full brothers in blood, bred by Joseph Ray of Bellingham. When only a few days old, the oxen were given by Ray to ten year old Walter E. Cooke, who trained and worked with them, exhibiting them every year at the New England Fair in Worcester, as well as other leading fairs, almost always winning first place.

In May of 1893, weighing 4100 pounds, Cooke sold them to J. D. Avery of Buckland, Mass. They worked for many years in farming and lumbering and in latter years at just enough light work for proper exercise. Campaigned through the fairs in 1893 and 94, as draft oxen, they never met their equal.

In their prime, they're known to have drawn 11,061 pounds on a drag, eight feet at one pull, in the dirt at dead level. A feat never accomplished by any other team.

At seven years of age, they weighed 6100 pounds, stood 17 hands high, had a girth of nine feet four inches and measured fourteen feet nine inches from tip to tip.

"OLD NICK"

Among the stories, possibly missed in the previous editions of Bellingham's history, is the tale of old Nick.

At six o'clock every weekday morning, Old Nick, a livery horse, was harnessed to a buggy. Driverless, with reins tied to the dash, he would faithfully trot down Mechanic Street where he would turn the carriage around and stop in front of the Whitney home to wait for Miss Allie.

As soon as she was seated in the carriage behind him, carefully and without guidance, Nick would escort the young lady to the railroad station on Depot Street where she met the train to Medway. She worked in the Straw Shop there. The year was 1908.

Once she alighted from the carriage, Old Nick returned to his own stable and waited for his owner, Earl Thayer, to free him from the wagon. In the evening Old Nick would return to drive Miss Allie home.

Because of his unusual abilities, Nick left an impression in the lives of many of the town fathers, who spread his fame throughout the community.

Incidently, historic notes add that when Nick needed new shoes, he would go, alone, to the blacksmith for them. Needless to say, Nick's power of reasoning was rare.

Described as an intelligent and thoughtful worker, Nick was rather frisky and mischievous on his own time. After many laboring years, Old Nick retired to the cornfield where he was left to roam, undisturbed, but never forgotten.

— Terse Verse —

The Pioneers would have shed big tears
And thrown away their axes,
If in a dream, they'd caught but a gleam
Of what we pay in taxes.

After five years attempt at town meeting, it was voted to raise money to start a school system.

In 1830 there were eight small school houses spread conveniently throughout the town. Their locations were:

Beaver Pond School — located near Varney Brothers

Hartford Avenue — across from the present North Grammar School

South Main Street — between Center and North Streets

North Main Street — at head of High Street

Lake Street — near Railroad Street

Maple Street — at east end of High Street

South Main Street — across from Lou's Market

Center School — at present location on Common

First grade at Center School in 1902: Harland Cook, Chester Rowse, Fred Hunter Ruth Haskard, Mildred Whiting, Pearl Hodgkins, and Lizzie Sears

THE SOCIETY FOR DETECTING HORSE THIEVES

The Society for Detecting Horse Thieves was organized on December 21, 1795 in the towns of Mendon, Bellingham and Milford. The officers consisted of a President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Committee on Accounts and Pursuing Committee. By November of 1879, there were 245 members, 60 from Mendon, 66 from Bellingham and 119 from Milford.

Residents of either of the towns became members for the sum of one dollar. The Pursuing Committee, consisting of not less than 12 members, recovered stolen horses and arrested horse thieves, but only members of the society were entitled to such action.

The society held meetings annually on the last Monday of October at which time new officers were also elected. Whenever funds belonging to the society amounted to fifteen hundred dollars, it was divided among the members, provided each had been a member for at least one year.

Members of the Pursuing Committee for the town of Bellingham in the year 1879 were; Amos Keach, James P. Thayer, Ruel F. Thayer, Samuel A. Adams and George Nelson. In that year, $3,500 was distributed among the 245 members, each receiving $14.22 3/4.

Five members from the Bates, Thayer and Cook families were listed as members and owners that year, four from the Adams and Chilson family, three from the Metcalf, Pickering, Rockwood and Grant families, and two each from the Wight, Wales, Scott, Smith, Crooks, Barber, Bullard, Fairbanks, Sherburne, Holbrook, Rhodes and Darling families.

IN THE EARLY 1800's

Poverty was more noticeable after war. A cow was nearly worth two houses.

AMBLER'S FARM PLAYGROUND

The 1933 depression put an end to the activities of a popular spot in Bellingham. During the late '20's and early '30's South Main Street near Scott Hill Auto Sales might have been jammed with cars and buses parked by people visiting Bellingham's popular playground which was open to groups and families for outings. (The largest group was sponsored by the Catholic Church of Boston which sent 64 buses and some private cars.)

There was a large picnic grove, baseball diamond, horseshoe court, miniature golf, swings, see-saws and a chair-type trolley slide starting 18 feet high and running 162 feet on a cable to the ground. One could have a pony or goat wagon ride or a ride on a chair plane swing. Horse back riding was taught.

The grounds also contained a small zoo with such a variety as: alligator, monkeys, rabbits, squirrels, white mice and white rats, guinea pigs, oppossum, porcupine, woodchucks, skunks, weasels and novelty poultry of all kinds including, geese, ducks, guinea hens, and white hens dyed red, blue, etc.

On Saturdays, Sundays and Holidays free vaudeville shows were given afternoons and evenings.

Two fine couples from North Bellingham celebrating the 4th of July in 1910. Michael and Mary (Desmond) Smith and John and Blanche (O'Connell) Kennedy.

The Darling - Colt Controversy Re-told

by Susan C. Parenteau

FOR years, Bellingham fathers have passed down to their sons, the Darling-Colt story and their invention of the first repeating, steel framed, pepperbox pistol, once manufactured in Bellingham.

According to legend, the Darling brothers, Barton and Benjamin, were first to invent the pistol in their Bellingham home. The state's boundary having been changed, the home today is located on Diamond Hill Road in Woonsocket, Rhode Island.

Benjamin Darling, the story goes, went to see his friend Samuel Colt, in Boston, seeking funds with which to patent his invention, the pepperbox pistol. Whether or not Mr. Colt fulfilled his request is not known. However, when the Darling's applied for their patent on April 13, 1836, they found that Colt had applied for the same patent a little more than sixty days prior on February 25.

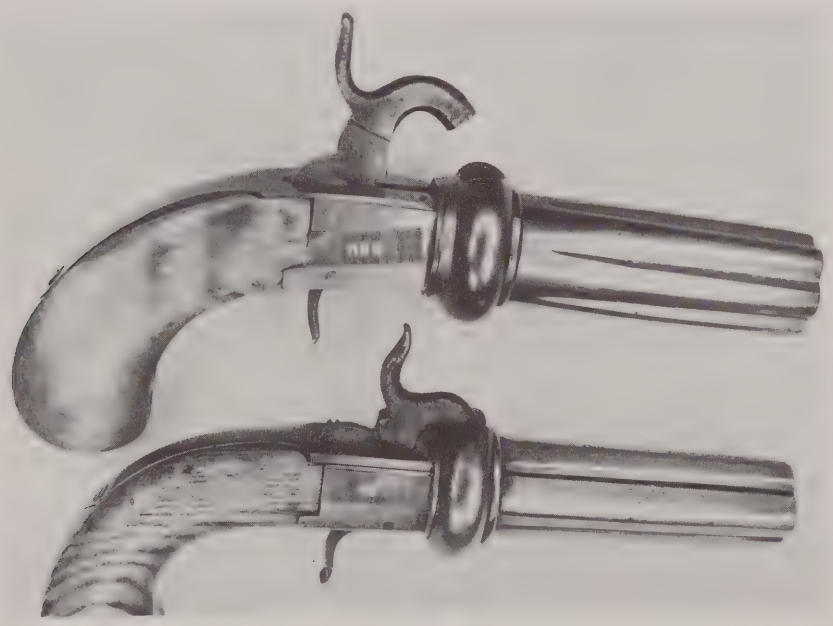
"With one rachet movement, the hammer was raised and chambers of the barrel were thrown into position to receive the discharge from a percussion cap." Albee also noted the great demand for these weapons in the South and West. These pistols, said to have "helped win the West", were eventually made in three, four and five barrel models. Like the Albee description, all were bored from one block with the chamber forming the whole length of the barrel.

With so few manufactured, gun collectors consider the six shot model quite a treasure. Two of these are on display at Harold's Club in Reno, Nevada.

Bellingham can take credit for being the town in which the Darling pistol was invented and can also boast of another native, Ethan Allen, not to be confused with the Vermont Ethan Allen, who invented a double action pepperbox, patented in 1837.

Though the Darling brothers are not considered the original inventors, they helped manufacture these weapons in Woonsocket where a brass model was made.

According to John Albee's "Confessions of Boyhood", similar pistols, if not the same, were manufactured in Worcester. Albee, who according to his book, worked in the factory there, described them as "a six-barreled, self-cocking revolver with all six barrels revolving on a rod running through the center.



THE TOWN LIBRARY

In 1894, Bellingham acquired a library when two Rockwood sisters decided to operate a reading room in their home, the Emerson Eldredge home in Bellingham Center. Interested persons made donations of books and magazines.

In 1905, the library was moved to the newly opened Massey School (Center School) where only three rooms were needed for classes. Sarah Rockwood was librarian. Marie Cooke, librarian for twenty years, served in the Massey School, the Town Hall and the Center Library.

In 1911, Ethel Cook started a library in her home, which is Cartier's Funeral Home today, in the South end. She served for thirty-nine years and was replaced by Violet Mowry, who has been the South Librarian for the past eighteen years.

When a fourth room was needed at the Massey School in 1928, the library was moved to the Town Hall. In March of 1929, $10,000. was appropriated to build a new library which was dedicated on May 15, 1930. Bellingham Grange #190 presented the library with a Hamilton Electric clock.

There were branch libraries in Caryville, North Bellingham, South Bellingham and Rakeville. Books were on loan to the North and South Schools. The North Branch moved to the North School basement in August of 1953. The South Branch moved from the South Community Building to Keough School in 1963.

From 1957 through 1960, town libraries underwent a new cataloguing system. 1966 saw the opening of The Children's Room in the basement of the Center Library. A trust fund to purchase books has been set up in the name of Henry A. Whitney.

BELLINGHAM HIGH SCHOOL.

CATALOGUE.

OCTOBER, 1833.

MALES' NAMES.	RESIDENCE.
Ahaz Allen, Jr.	*Mendon.*
Daniel J. F. Barney,	*Bellingham.*
Daniel Bates,	*do*
William B. Bates,	*Mendon.*
Adams Bates,	*Bellingham.*
Alanson Bates,	*do*
Stephen G. Bates,	*do*
Fisher A. Bosworth,	*do*
Leonard Bullard,	*do*
Oded Coombs,	*do*
James M. Curtis,	*Mendon.*
Charles Dewing,	*Bellingham.*
Eliab Holbrook, Jr.	*do*
Whitman Holbrook,	*do*
James T. Holbrook,	*do*
Francis Kelley,	*do*
Stephen V. Lewett,	*do*
Cyrus Pickering,	*do*
Joseph Partridge,	*do*
Amos Partridge, Jr.	*do*
Charles A. Ray,	*West Wrentham.*
James P. Ray,	*Mendon.*
Martin Rockwood, Jr.	*Bellingham.*
John Rockwood,	*do*
John O. Sayles,	*do*
Samuel S. Scammell,	*do*
James M. Sherman,	*Northbridge.*
George Thayer,	*Bellingham.*
John M. Thayer,	*do*
Alpheus Thayer, 2d.	*do*
William D. Thayer,	*do*
Tyler Thayer,	*Medfield.*
Metcalf Thayer,	*Mendon.*
Eli Thayer,	*do*
James Thayer,	*Bellingham.*
Alfred White,	*do*
Francis L. Wight,	*do*

FEMALES' NAMES.	RESIDENCE.
Rhoda A. Albee,	*Bellingham.*
Chloe E. Allen,	*Mendon.*
Electa Bates,	*Bellingham.*
Senah A. Bates,	*do*
Sylvia W. Bates,	*Mendon.*
Sybil Bates,	*Bellingham.*
Ann A. Bates,	*do*
Nabby S. Burr,	*do*
Emeline Burr,	*do*
Lucy Chickering,	*Dover.*
Mercy H. Comstock,	*Mendon.*
Nancy W. Cook,	*Bellingham.*
Mary J. Crooks,	*do*
Lydia E. Fisher,	*do*
Clarisa L. Holbrook,	*do*
Lurania Holbrook,	*do*
Lucretia Holbrook,	*do*
Mary B. Holbrook,	*do*
Mary M. Lyon,	*Woodstock, Ct.*
Louisa M. Messenger,	*Bellingham.*
Lucy Partridge,	*do*
Hannah Pickering	*do*
Mary Pickering,	*do*
Abigail L. Rockwood,	*do*
Maria Rockwood,	*do*
Susan A. Rockwood,	*do*
Olive A. Smith,	*do*
Mary A. Smith,	*do*
Lydia Scott,	*Petersham.*
Jane L. Scammell,	*Bellingham.*

MALES, 37—FEMALES, 30—TOTAL, 67.

EDWARD FREEMAN, A. B. Principal.
SARAH B. FREEMAN, Assistant.

TO THE PUBLIC.

The second Term of this Institution will commence NOVEMBER 20th, under the superintendence of Mr. EDWARD FREEMAN, A. B. The friends of this Institution design it to be permanent—and most ardently hope it will receive all that encouragement from the Public, which its merits deserve. The design of the Teacher in imparting instruction is to unite the useful with the agreeable. His plan of teaching is inductive. No Student is permitted to advance faster than he thoroughly understands. The branches taught are those which are usually taught in High Schools and Academies. The higher branches of Mathematics, and the Studies preparatory to admission into College, are particularly attended to. The Teacher will at all times, exercise a prudent supervision over the Morals and Manners of his Pupils. The undersigned have full confidence in the ability of the Teacher to instruct, govern and guide, Youth committed to his charge; and from a knowledge of his mode of teaching, do cordially lend their names, as pledges to the Public, for the confidence that shall be reposed in him.

S. ATWOOD,
JOHN BATES,
JOHN COOK, 2nd.
STEPHEN LEWETT,
JOSEPH ROCKWOOD. } DIRECTORS.

N. B.—Tuition as usual. Board—from $1,00 to $1,75 per week.

Printed at the Patriot and River Office, Woonsocket Falls, R. I.

Bellingham's Newer Schools

Pinecrest School

Bellingham Memorial Junior-Senior High School

Clara B. Macy School

Look How Bellingham Has Grown!

Year	Population	Legal Voters	Town Expenditures	Valuation of Taxes Assessed	Poll Tax Payers	Tax Rate
1915	1953	412		$ 1,024,895.00	523	$
1925	2877	803	$ 196,445.62	2,262,824.00	818	30.00
1935	3056	1239	188,342.64	2,321,037.00	930	38.40
1945	3494	1685	320,827.56	2,762,430.00	912	43.50
1955	5421	2681	788,519.01	6,564,705.00	1587	39.00
1965	10,604	4970	2,825,230.49	15,220,120.00	discontinued	66.00
1968	12,500	5750	*4,005,318.81	17,976,405.00*		107.00

* 1967 latest available figure

Year	Forest Fires	Regular Fires	Snow Removal	Police	Welfare	Regular Fire Calls	Forest Fires	Ambulance Runs
1925	$ 763.94	$ 320.90	$ 518.22	$ 723.33	$ 9539.69			
1935	713.62	514.70	3500.00	999.36	23224.15			
1945	2500.00	2498.32	9399.36	5882.49	69681.15	20	27	
1955	3462.11	6497.07	5524.84	11690.26	133477.58	42	51	34
1965	7101.70	12489.38	22482.46	64634.60	174305.24	68	124	267
1967	4219.54	18978.25	69772.36	133221.83	137005.47	115	83	301

Year	Budgets School	Budgets Library	Library Circulation	Number of Teachers	Cost of Teachers	Cost of Books
1925	$ 31,003.17	$ 499.82	5453	16	$ 14,784.37	$ 643.04
1935	45,677.00	649.96	21717	20	22,072.44	1,212.25
1945	54,999.20	622.15	4673	25	30,113.96	481.08
1955	169,887.40	2,754.49	11561	33	101,539.79	3,938.04
1965	762,613.10	10,934.69	29881	92	441,535.29	22,537.29
1967	1,095,646.50	12,369.25	29473	132*	635,321.06	33,748.93

* plus 1 Superintendent, 5 Principals, 3 Guidance Counselors, 3 Nurses, 8 Clerks, 18 Custodians, 1 Cafeteria Manager and 16 Cafeteria Workers.

Year	Enrollment Elementary	Enrollment High School	Graduates Elementary	Graduates High School
1925	465	52	19	
1935	625	97	37	
1945	423	118	36	24
1955	665	193	91	29
1965	1461	627	160	94
1968	2046	976	188	143

TOWN AFFAIRS

1920 - 1968

An addition to South School in 1920, brought the total amount of classrooms to eight in that school.

In 1921 the town voted to assume and pay all land damages that would result from laying out and building of a state highway over Scott Hill. That same year, a legislative act required a nurse in every school.

In 1922 South Grammar school was provided with electricity; North School was damaged by lightning and all town schools were closed at the end of the year because of a lack of fuel. In that same year, uniforms were provided for the police force and a summer theatre and other buildings were completely destroyed by fire at Silver Lake.

The Johnson Bus Company began transporting pupils to school in the fall of 1924, and a PTA was started in the South. That same year, a portion of South Main Street was paved though the sides and cross drainage were inadequate. Police were required to keep heavy trucks off the new highways because they tore up the new pavement.

Dependent on surrounding towns for fire protection, the town finally showed interest, in 1925, in having its own fire department. Coal was used to heat schools that year and a PTA started in the Center. Interesting facts in that year's town records showed two new cemeteries, Precious Blood on Wrentham Road and the DeJony Farm Cemetery, a private cemetery were started. Wages were up to 50¢ per hour on the highway; gravel and sand 15¢ a load; concrete, $1.50 a yard; coal, $6.75 and $8.50 per ton; one horse team, 30¢ per hour while a two horse team cost $1.10 per hour.

With a well dug at South School in 1926, and water piped in, bubblers were installed.

An authentic portrait of Gov. Richard Bellingham, 3rd governor of Massachusetts, for whom the town was named, was given to the public library in 1927 by George F. Partridge, through the kindness of Mrs. Susie Fairbanks. Electric lights were installed at South School, in one room, to accommodate 15 to 25 adults who enrolled in evening classes. School Supt. Drown, that same year, requested at least one piano be put into every school.

This scene, looking north along South Main Street, was taken in 1919 near the 1969 site of Cartier's Funeral Home.

The town farm, which had been kept up, at a cost of $9,539.69 in 1928 was closed and two welfare cases were boarded out at the Milford Town Farm. The community room at South School was converted into classrooms making a total of 17 rooms. Toothbrushes were sold in classrooms for 7¢ each and hot cocoa was served in schools for 3¢ by 4-H girls. Permits were given to 40 dairies that produced one can or more milk per day.

In 1929 South Main St. hill was partially

tarred and catch basins, manholes and pipe lines were installed to handle the water on that street, Wrentham Road and Center Street. Trucks weighing over 10,000 lbs. required a permit to travel over So. Main, Center and Franklin Sts. from February 15 of that year to June 1.

The town library was closed for six weeks for the purpose of reorganization and cataloguing according to the Dewey Decimal System. The South community building was completed and dedicated and two hundred seats, in blocks of four, were purchased for Town Hall. The PTA bought and placed shrubs around South School and a new heating system was installed at Center School. There were 35 people on welfare, $1,000 was received for all of them per year.

The Center Library was completed and dedicated May 15, 1930. Census reports show the town's total population to be 3,186. Hartford Avenue was the first tarring project completed. It was also in 1930 that the first highway truck was purchased, a 1½ ton Ford dump truck.

The following year, 1931, the town purchased a Ford fire truck and a volunteer Fire Dept. was organized in South Bellingham. The school situation was as follows: Center School: A new toilet system and drinking fountains installed; three rooms require electricity. North School: A small orchestra was formed under the direction of Miss Mayer. A dental clinic was held in Town schools.

The town farm was sold in January for $6,000. The South library moved to the South Community building from the home of Ethel Cook while the North Library was located in Grace Goldthwaite's Caryville Store.

In 1933, town tax rate decreased from $34.00 to $28.40; however, the town was required to borrow from individuals to meet obligations. Highway laborers received 30¢ per hour wages.

The following year, street lights were discontinued during day light savings time in the interest of economy. A sewing unit for production of garments started in town hall on August 1st, and the first diptheria prevention clinic was held. Town welfare administrators were Warren Whiting, Herbert H. Ambler, and Edwin F. Tuttle.

By 1935, town schools were finally complete with the installation of electric lights. The following year, the Federal Government contributed over $16,000 worth of surplus commodities to the needy people in town.

In 1937, the North Library was moved to the home of Mrs. Thelma Lakeman and a new fence was built around the South School play area.

Bellingham Junction, located on Depot Street, was torn down in the late 1920's.

Bellingham High School (now Keough School) opened in the fall of 1938. Lionel Trudeau was principal. Public Speaking, Dramatic Club, Orchestra and Glee Clubs were started at the High School, also a Girl's basketball team, indoor tennis, volleyball and baseball teams were started. The boys had basketball in their first year only. That year also, the New Haven Railroad agreed to build a 32 foot bridge over tracks on South Main St. if the town would close Mendon Road, now Elm Street. With the help of the Public Works Administration Railroad Grade Crossing Act, funds were raised to relocate the road leading on to South Main Street.

James J. Keough School, formerly Bellingham High School, on Harpin Street.

The floods of 1938 caused this scene at the Hat Shop on Beech Street in Caryville.

In June of 1939, 29 students graduated from the new High School. Chief of Police Euclide A. Fleuette was placed under Civil Service to increase efficiency by having a man on duty all hours of the day.

By 1940, hot lunch programs had begun in town schools and permanent district nurses were made available every day of the week. The following year, classes started in first aid, auxiliary police and air raid wardens to protect the welfare of the town. Station No. 2 of the Fire Dept. in the center of the town was formed. A diamond T combination pumper was housed at Captain Carleton Gaskill's garage on Mechanic Street. L. Francis Thayer retired as forest warden after 33 years.

Intramural sports were discontinued in schools of Bellingham in 1943 because buses were kept ready for emergency needs only.

At the end of the war in 1945, when Civilian Defense died a natural death, the Highway Dept. eliminated Scott's Curve, and the Fire Department converted an old highway truck into a forest fire truck again housed at Gaskill's.

The following year brought the Office of Veteran's Service. Assisted by 9 board members, Lionel R. Trudeau, Director, provided assistance and information to all veteran problems. In that year also, North Bellingham acquired its own Community Building. Fire trucks in center were moved into new quarters at rear of Town Hall in Fire Station-Highway Garage Building.

Bellingham's food project on South Main Street during the depression years, 1930-1935.

In 1947, the town enjoyed a building boom and the mill at Box Pond also continued to enlarge. Erection of an airport in North Bellingham was started.

In 1948, Pulaski Blvd. was resurfaced and brighter street lights were installed at Crooks' Corner and Bellingham Center, to aid pedestrians and motorists.

In 1949, the town improved Petrosky's Curve and widened Wrentham Road. Other dangerous curves on North and South Main Streets were eliminated the following year.

Three bus shelters and a gas stove for the kitchen in Town Hall were donated by the Grange in 1950. A new International Forest Fire truck made its home in South Station that same year.

All night street lighting was put back into effect in 1951 and the town dump was relocated off Center Street.

The Blackstone Wool Combing Co., Bellingham Textiles, and Packard Mills, which were operating at full capacity, in 1952, were major contributions to the town's progress. In that same year, two-way Radios were added to the Police Dept., a 40 foot bridge was constructed on Cross Street and a little league field, complete with bleachers, was laid out near Keough High School. Fire Chief Wasyl Kornicki retired, his son, Peter, was named Chief and Vincent Thayer became the town's first Deputy Fire Chief.

Two Emerson rescuscitators were purchased for the Fire Dept. in 1953, and a combination Ambulance-Recue truck was donated to the town by the Lion's Club the following year. That same year, a basketball court was added to the Municipal Field. A 4-wheel drive forest fire piece added to town's equipment at Center Station.

1955 brought the establishment of the Town Planning Board; the first polio clinic; Scott Hill acres, the town's first housing development; and Veteran's Memorial Bridge on Wrentham Road, in memory of all deceased town veterans.

While developed areas were seeking acceptance for new streets in 1956, Edmund Gentes was named first training director of the Ambulance-Rescue Wagon. The first radios were bought for the fire trucks, through the cooperation of the Civilian Defense.

Pinecrest, a new Elementary School in South Bellingham, opened its doors in 1958 and the Lion's Club donated playground equipment to North Municipal Field and South School grounds.

Can you find? Charlotte Rhodes, Albert Paquin, Mildred Unwin, Irma Crooks, Eloise Rhodes, Harriet Whiting, Clarence Leland, Laura Richards, Raymond 'Bud' Mowry and Harold Burr.

South Grammar School

Many improvements were made in town in 1959, Town Hall was painted, its roof repaired and new chairs added; a new addition to South Community Bldg. housed the Rescue Wagon while a tennis court and storage building were added to north Municipal Field.

In 1962, 18 firemen and one of the town's oldest trucks meant the establishment of a new department at the North end with Lieutenant Bernard Joanis in charge. A new 750 gallon pumper was added to the Dept. in the South.

In 1961, the Industrial Development Commission adopted "Bellingham The Heart of The Golden Triangle" as a slogan and with proposed Route 495 to cross Hartford Avenue, the commission hoped to attract new industry. The town acquired a new, modern ambulance as a result of a fund drive and town appropriated funds. The older rescue truck was moved to the center.

The town got a new well and pumping station in 1962 located on land off Wrentham Street.

Bellingham underwent a number of changes in 1963 when Dal-Mor Plaza opened on Pulaski Blvd; St. Blaise Church was dedicated; construction began for the town's first Bank, the Norfolk County Trust Co. on South Main Street; the North Library was enlarged to twice its size; sidewalks were put in from Easy Street to Potter Drive; an addition was made to North Community building to house the North Fire Station; and Almac's was planned in the center of town. The American Legion home was acquired and the Knights of Columbus was organized. South School went on double sessions; the High School Basketball team won the Bay State Basketball Tournament Championship; and the last class was graduated from the High School, Keough School.

With the opening of Memorial High School, the following year, the South Library relocated in the basement of Keough School. The Highway Dept. purchased a Trojan Front-end Loader and the Police Dept. a second cruiser.

Thayer's market, in Bellingham Center, and an adjoining grain building were remodelled adding new store facilities to the area while a drug store and medical building were also built in the same area.

The town acquired a new water standpipe off Chestnut Street and the town hall kitchen was improved. In that same year, 1964, Miss Clara Macy of North Bellingham was honored at a banquet for her 50 years service to the community as a school teacher.

In 1965, 94 diplomas were awarded to Memorial High School's first graduating class; adult education programs began; the Center Fire-Police station was completed; and Thayer's Market closed after serving the public for 80 years.

The Housing Authority, a seven man Building Code Committee and five man Capital Improvement Program Committee was named.

Clara Macy School located off Hartford Ave. opened the following year. Selectmen voted that residents could not have more than one unregistered motor vehicle, assembled or disassembled, unless it was stored or kept in a building.

In 1968, residents were finally able to make toll free telephone calls throughout town; committees gathered to plan for the town's 250th Anniversary celebration to be held in 1969; the American Telephone and Telegraph Co. laid out underground cables throughout the town and outlying areas for future and better communication; and two new large shopping centers were proposed for the town; one near Scott Hill Acres, the other near corner of North Main Street and Hartford Avenue.

Progress in Bellingham is People

Elected officers in the management of Town Affairs, as of January 1, 1969, included (the town fathers) the three selectmen, Chairman, David L. Tuttle, Jr., Joseph Spas and Joseph Scolovino. The three men are responsible for appointing a Clerk of the Board of Selectmen; a Secretary to the Board; Highway Superintendent; Workmen's Compensation Agent; Town Accountant; Town Counsel; Health Agent; Health Officer; Custodians; Dog Officer; Inspectors of Wires, Slaughtering, Animals and Milk; and a Sealer of Weights and Measures.

Also, a Veteran's Agent; Zoning Board of Appeals; the Town Dump Caretaker; Fire Chief; Deputy Chief and Ambulance Rescue Clerk; Zoning Agent; Chief of Police and patrolmen; Inspector of Plumbing; Memorial and Veterans Day Committees; Civil Defense Officials; School Building Need Committee; Jury lists and others.

Other elected officers include: a Town Clerk, Lionel Trudeau; Town Treasurer, N. Andre Trudeau; Tax Collector, Joseph M. Bonollo; three Tax Assessors, Elsworth Crooks, Donat Laplante, and Earl Rogers; three Water Commissioners, Thomas Heavey, Leopold Dussault and Eugene Corriveau; a Town Moderator, R. Bernard Biron and five Public Welfare Members.

Also elected were five Planning Board members; a Tree Warden; five School Committeemen, six Library Trustees; three Cemetery Committee Members; four Constables; five members of the Housing Authority; a Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational-Technical School Committee Member and a Park Commissioner.

POLICE DEPARTMENT –

Upholding law and order are Acting Police Chief Norman McLinden, four Police Sergeants, eleven patrolmen, four female crossing guards and approximately forty special or part-time patrolmen. Prior to 1957, Euclide Fleuette was for many years a one man Police Force, on call around the clock, seven days a week. In 1957, Norman McLinden and Edmond Cote were named as the town's first patrolmen. In 1967, General Budget Appropriation was over $130,000. There are three cruisers patrolling the town today on a 24-hour basis.

Fire Station No. 1 at South Bellingham with all equipment pictured.

THE FIRE DEPARTMENT –

Three Fire Stations, one in each section of town, North, South and Center, are under the direction of Fire Chief Peter Kornicki. Deputy Chief Vincent Thayer, three Captains one at the helm of each station, six Lieutenants and sixty trained volunteer firefighters, with four combination pumpers, two forest fire trucks, one ambulance, a rescue-ambulance, and 15 trained first-aid men including a Captain and Lieutenant, help to protect our town.

THE TOWN WATER DEPARTMENT –

Superintendent Alderic Marcet, three Water Commissioners and a clerk supervise the Departments three trucks and five operating wells, averaging approximately one million gallons of water per day for the town's 3,450 water takers.

Late in 1968 voters approved, by secret ballot, a $587,000. bond issue for improvements to the town water system. The amount also includes funds to match a federal grant of $483,000. which the town was awarded through the Department of Housing and Urban Development. This is the first step of a four-step program to be undertaken.

THE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT –

Twelve pieces of Highway Department equipment are at the disposal of Superintendent Gerard Daigle and members of the Department for 90 miles of roadway in Bellingham. By the close of 1969, the Dept. plans to be organized with a union, but until that time arrives the hourly wage is $2.40.

THE AUXILIARY POLICE DEPARTMENT

Of the many committees and groups that were formed during World War II, only one group continued to meet and function as outstanding, dedicated men, the Auxiliary Police Department which Anthony Balliro heads as chief. Civilian Defense involved everyone, willing, to form a "home-front." The Auxiliary performs such duties as: Church Duty, Parade Duty, Cruiser Duty, Traffic Duty, Social Activities Duty and numerous other contributions of free-hours time. Most of the men are trained in handling of firearms, are capable of taking over First-Aid Duty in a serious accident, and are always willing to turn out around the clock to help their fellow townspeople.

In the oldest town records (1719-1747) these unusual votes were made: Assessors were given ten shillings to make rates or taxes; committees must be chosen to "reckon with the treasurer."; and "swine to go at large this year."

In 1721, the town voted to build two pounds for stray cattle.

1737 brought this entertaining vote; "To see what this Town will do about hogs; whether they will run at large or shut them up and also, to see what the Town will do about the rats on John Thompson's property that he can not get rid of." It was voted to sink the rats but the hogs were forgotten.

In 1786 a man working on the highway received four pence an hour and the same for his cart and oxen.

At an 1816 town meeting it was voted: "To transfer all business that hath been done at the September meeting to the April meeting and discontinue the former."

Even as late as 1833, town records read, "cattle and horses shall not run at large on the highways."

In 1853 it was voted "to pay 25¢ for the head of an old crow, 12½¢ for a young one, and 25¢ for a woodchuck. All other birds and beasts to run at large."

"O Little Town of Bellingham . . . "

Because of its rapid growth, Bellingham is called the "bedroom town of suburban Boston." New residents settle here with the same desires and ambitions as the old – for independence.

"It's What's Happening!"

JUNE 1968 TO JUNE 1969 –

Nationally, this was an era of colored television, race riots, student protest marches, the Viet Nam War, hippies, astronauts going around the moon and missiles. Headlining the news in 1968, a leap year, was the Presidential election won by Richard M. Nixon, the assasination of Robert F. Kennedy and the marriage of Jacqueline Kennedy, five-year widow of assassinated President John F. Kennedy, to Greek billionaire Aristotle Onassis.

Also making headlines were strikes, airplane highjackings to Cuba, police brutality, mod fashions and mini-skirts. On the fashion scene, women were wearing their hair either very short or straight and down to their waists. Hemlines were at the ankle or a little below the thigh, though most often they were dressed in slacks. Men returned to the wide lapels and neckties of the '20's, and laced shirts, sideburns, moustaches and beards. Fashion markets advertised matching fur coats and hand bags for both men and women.

The teenage rage was "Tiny Tim", an undesirable looking male with shoulder length, stringy hair and the singing voice of a woman. They, having a dialogue of their own for centuries, spoke in terms of "making the scene", and a "trip" was not only "in" but the "greatest".

The "Jet Set" toured the world at the expense of their wealthy parents and narcotics plagued the nation in the form of LSD, pot and marijuana. Negroes, who had for over a century, fought for their freedom and equality, were slowly reaching their goal. On the whole, the country was no different. Its unusual changes and new ways, unfamiliar and undesired by most, were still considered a result of the modern generation.

WHILE IN BELLINGHAM . . . .

Numerous accidents on the North Main St. Bridge span headlined the news, as well as interstate highway Route 495 passing through town. A spectacular fire destroyed Wade's Barn; a housing project was being constructed for the elderly and two large shopping plazas were proposed. The town's water needs was in constant discussion as well as its high rate of $107 per thousand and its population's rapid growth, estimated at 12,000 with 23,000 to 25,000 predicted for 1985.

Housing for elderly located on Depot St.

SCHOOLS –

A $1,285,000 addition to Memorial High School was voted in order to eliminate double sessions; salary increases were asked for by school teachers, but were refused; evening adult classes were held in Memorial High School; and 3,033 students were enrolled in town schools. For the first time in the town's history, Bellingham High School was granted full membership in the New England Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. Benefits, to be gained by students, would be realized through the improved curriculum as well as being listed nationally in the Association making it easier for acceptance in schools of higher learning outside the New England area. Membership will also prove valuable in receiving scholarship aid.

TOWN ORGANIZATIONS –

Scout troops were very active; numerous events were being sponsored by Church groups, the Lions, and the newly organized Jaycees. The successful events of the Brothers of the Brush and Belles, organized in conjunction with the town's 250th Anniversary, added a touch of humor and enjoyment to the problems of the day.

Pay raise requests for town workers were plentiful; selectmen approved a meeting place for the town's teenagers by offering them the use of the Lyndon F. Murray Memorial Building; and new equipment was purchased for the police and fire departments including new cruisers, a most controversial matter throughout the year, they having been involved in numerous accidents.

Included in local newspapers subscribed to by town residents, was an ad for skin diving equipment at the Flipper Ship on South Main St.; Real W. Jobin, Chiropractor with an office on the same street and Warwick Shoppers World's ads for portable phonographs at $35, hair dryers at $30, color television sets from $400 to $530, and wigs or hair pieces from $13 to $50.

Some of the newer committees formed, from which the Town should expect a great deal in the years ahead, are: Conservation Committee, Capital Improvements Committee and the Industrial Development Commission.

Aerial Photo Taken by Ted Rose.
Plane Piloted by Stanley Gardner.

1 Jr. Sr. Memorial High School
2 St. Blaise Church
3 Town Hall and Junction of Routes 140 & 126
4 Wethersfield
5 Hartford Avenue at Junction of Routes 495 & 126
6 Pilgrim Village

ACTIVE ORGANIZATIONS IN 1969

THE POLISH AMERICAN CITIZENS CLUB

The Polish American Citizens Club of Bellingham was founded on March 15, 1936. The Charter to the club was granted on Feb. 2, 1938. First President of the organization was Peter Kwiatkowski. Secretary of the club was Stanley Roman. Through their efforts the main boulevard in South Bellingham was named Pulaski on the 15th of September, 1939. The founding of this club originated at the home of Joseph Waszkiewicz on Pickering Road in Bellingham.

The purpose of this organization is,

> "to promote the advancement of American residents of Polish extraction in Bellingham in the social, economic, and political life of the community."

THE LADIES AID SOCIETY OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

It is not known when the Ladies Aid Society began. Earliest records are dated Dec. 4, 1907 though there are records missing for the years 1932-1943. It was organized to take the place of a women's missionary society that existed in 1890. Mrs. Marie Cooke, and Mrs. Ruel Thayer are the oldest living members. Their first order of business, in 1907, was to hang the Massey portrait in the church on the west wall which was given them by the Darling brothers in 1891. In 1968 they purchased an oil painting of the church by Charles Poitras of Bellingham to be hung on the wall of the Sunday School room.

Since the Ladies Aid and the Grange together had use of a Supper Room in Town Hall, they decided to purchase a stove, jointly. The stove, however, proved unsatisfactory and by April, 1908, they disposed of it at a loss of $2.50 to each group.

They tied quilts and made aprons at their meetings for sale at their annual Fair. They also ran suppers to earn money for philanthropic ventures. Quilts were tied for private parties at 50¢ each. Day work on quilts was priced at 20¢ per worker while finishing it cost 15¢. In 1909, they charged 5¢ an hour for sewing and mending.

Through the years they have helped the church in all its projects. They maintained the parsonage on Mendon Street, after the society disbanded in 1909, until it was sold.

The Ladies Aid by-laws were re-written and updated in 1967. Their meetings today are held on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month. The first monthly meeting is a general business meeting followed by a social hour and refreshments. The 2nd meeting is an entertaining one with a speaker, or program of some sort and refreshments are served. Annual functions and activities include a Christmas party at the December meeting, a Mother and Daughter banquet with entertainment each Spring, giving carnations to Mothers on Mother's Day and to Fathers on Father's Day, and ending each year's activities by going out to eat, as a group, in early July. They still put on suppers, occasionally tie quilts, hold an annual Fair, continue to contribute to and help support the church, Sunday Schools, various organizations and institutions.

ASSUMPTION PARISH HOLY NAME SOCIETY

The Assumption Parish Holy Name Society was founded in 1927. Over one hundred and fifty men are enrolled. Meetings are held on the first Sunday of every month in the Parish hall. It's prime objective is to encourage all men to respect the Holy Name of God.

Devotion to the Holy Name goes back to the Old Testament where is found reverence for the Name of God enjoined by the Second Commandment. The Holy Name Society in the Catholic Church can be traced back to the Thirteenth Century when the so called heretics of that day, particularly in France and Spain, made violent attacks upon the Divinity of Christ and used the Holy Name of God as an epithet to express every unholy feeling.

The Society has held Ham and Bean Suppers, Pancake and Sausage Breakfasts to raise funds which are turned back to the parish. Bicycle racks and a fence around the Assumption school have been purchased from this money. An annual Parish Picnic is held at Bungay Brook.

THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S GUILD OF ASSUMPTION PARISH

On October 6, 1958 the Catholic Women's Guild of Assumption Church held its first formal meeting at the request of Rev. Albert Bergeron, pastor. This group organized to give the English speaking women of the parish a chance to develop their spiritual as well as social and educational needs. The prime purpose is to bring members together in a common act of devotion to God.

Old Assumption Parish now headquarters of C.Y.O.

The main charitable project of the Guild is to present annually a scholarship to a high school graduate from the parish who is going to continue his education. The money has been raised by a fashion show, whist parties and a silent auction.

SAINT BRENDAN'S WOMEN'S CLUB

Saint Brendan's Women's Club is for women of any denomination and was founded in January 1965, by Father Edmund Griffin, former pastor.

The purposes of Saint Brendan's Women's Club are social enjoyment of its members and the support of Saint Brendan's Church.

COUNCIL LAFAYETTE #439 L'UNION ST. JEAN BAPTISTE d'AMERIQUE

Council Lafayette #439 of l'Union St. Jean Baptiste d' Amerique was chartered on October 27, 1957.

L'Union St. Jean Baptiste d'Amerique is a Woonsocket based insurance company whose purpose, other than to provide insurance coverage, is to foster religious, patriotic and French culture to the people of Franco-American ancestry.

The name of Lafayette was chosen for the Council's name in 1957 because that year marked the 200th birthday of Marquis de Lafayette, French general and statesman.

Council Lafayette, the youngest of l'Union's 233 Councils, holds the distinction of being the most active.

Projects include dinner meetings, scholarship awards, social functions, special activities for members in the juvenile section, donations of French books to Assumption parochial school library and to graduates who have excelled in French.

Charter officers include Leo A. Gosselin as president; Lionel J. Frappier, secretary; William Gaudette, treasurer and Hugo C. Savard as collector.

4-H CLUBS

4-H Clubs in Bellingham started as part of the school program in 1924. U. S. sponsored, they have served millions of American youth. The girls did sewing and the boys manual training in the basement of the school. Members made and served hot cocoa to South pupils who brought lunch. At that time, 4-H club activities were included in the Superintendent of Schools report.

A four-year anniversary celebration was held in 1929. Gladys Cooke, daughter of Marie Cooke and the late Walter P. Cooke was awarded a week's trip to Washington, D. C. being one of four in the state to receive this, the highest prize given to a club member by the Extension Service.

By 1931, meetings were held in the classroom, after school. Projects included sewing, crafts, knitting, cooking, canning and manual training.

Thelma Cook, (Mrs. Richard Ambler) of Bellingham Center was Club leader in the South End in 1931. She later moved to the Center and led clubs there, where she received a pin and certificate for 25 years service.

In 1957, Mrs. Ambler's son, Richard, won an all expenses paid trip to Chicago to the National Club Congress. He also won the Richardson Trophy presented each year to the outstanding club member of Norfolk County and he represented Norfolk County at a N. E. Recreational Conference at Burlington, Vt.

When 4-H clubs were at their height, Bellingham had close to 100 members. Members took trips to Boston, Worcester, among other places. Each year they attended the Eastern States Exposition on the first Saturday, 4-H Club Day, participating in the parade. Teenage girls attended "Teen Tour" each April in Boston where they went on guided tours of schools and hospitals for more information on their chosen fields. They exhibited at Weymouth, Rehoboth, Marshfield, and East Blackstone Fairs. They also put on demonstrations and exhibited on 4-H Achievement Day at Norfolk County Agricultural High School. Each year, they participated in Store Window Exhibits and Poster contests sponsored by the County.

Many members attended Camp Farley, a 4-H Camp on Cape Cod, some serving as Junior Counselors. Mrs. Ambler has been a Director of this camp for several years. This camp is located at Mashpee, Mass. and members go there from Barnstable, Bristol, Norfolk, and Plymouth Counties.

4-H Group around 1957: Rita Desjarlais, Pauline Desmarais, Jo-Anne Gardner, Kelly Richardson, Mrs. Thelma Ambler, Leader; Carol Hill, Dolly Kearnan, Diane Stearns, Janice Peneau, Sharon Trippe, Katherine Hannigan, Catherine Fraser, Robin Richardson and Diane Gardner.

Due to lack of leadership, there have only been three clubs organized in 1968, a horse club led by Lillian LaLiberte, a sewing club led by Myrna Simonson, and a craft club with Thelma Ambler as leader.

Meetings generally include a demonstration or work period and a recreational program.

GIRL SCOUTS

If girls in Bellingham were as interested in becoming members of the Girl Scout organization as were their contemporaries in neighboring towns, it is possible that there was a Girl Scout troop in the area as early as the 1920's. There are no council records for the 1920's, '30's or '40's. Records, if any, may be preserved in local attics in the form of leaders' copies of lone troop registrations and individual girl and adult membership cards. We hope that this article will inspire a search for these documents so that the early history of troops can be recorded.

Mrs. Olga Burgess and Mrs. Fred Mennerick first started Girl Scouts in town. In 1953, Mrs. Mennerick, leader of a lone troop in South Bellingham applied to join the Woonsocket Girl Scout Council. With the approval of Girl Scouts of the U. S. A. and the Woonsocket Community Fund the council jurisdiction was extended to include that area.

By 1960, the Woonsocket Council was serving all troops in Bellingham. In 1962, nine existing councils in Rhode Island were consolidated and the towns of Bellingham, Blackstone, and Millville, Massachusetts were voted to remain as members. They named their area the State Line Neighborhood of the new council and in 1968 the town became the Bellingham Neighborhood of District VII, Girl Scout of Rhode Island, Inc.

Mrs. Eugene Bartlett is 1968 chairman of the Volunteer Neighborhood Service Team whose members provide services to 214 girls, age 7-14, in 4 Brownie troops, 4 Junior Troops, and 1 Cadette Girl Scout troop in the town. 31 adult volunteers serve as leaders, assistants and troop committee members.

BELLINGHAM LIONS CLUB

The Bellingham Lions Club was founded on January 21, 1951, with Francis G. Locklin elected first King Lion, Bruno Santini, and Leo Levitre, Vice-Presidents, Walter Mostek, Treasurer and Lucien Gagne, Secretary. The club set forth as its Purposes and Objectives the same ones that the International Association of Lions Clubs espouses namely:

1. To promote the theory and practice of the principals of good government and good citizenship.

2. To take an active interest in the civic, social, and moral welfare of the community.

3. To unite the members in the bonds of friendship, good fellowship and mutual understanding.

4. To provide a forum for all the full and free discussion of all matters of public interest, partisan politics and sectarian religion alone excepted.

5. To encourage efficiency and promote high ethical standards in business and professions; provided that this club shall not hold out as one of its objects financial benefits to its members.

The Bellingham Lions Club, over the years, has endeavored to meet and fulfill these purposes. The following is a listing of some of the Highlights of the Club's activities over the last 17 years.

1952—Established an evening to honor Bellingham High School Athletics. This has become an annual affair.

1953—To assist in the Massachusetts Eye Research. This has led to the Club's largest fund raising activity that takes place on an annual basis, namely, the White Cane Day Drive, held in October.

1954—The Club purchased a combination ambulance-rescue truck for the Town of Bellingham. The project was completed and the truck was presented to the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen, who accepted it on behalf of the town.

1958—The Bellingham Lions Club purchased and installed equipment for the town's playgrounds.

1962—A Lion's Scholarship Fund was established.

1967—An Outstanding Citizen's Award was established. The first recipient was Maurice LeBlanc, Scoutmaster of Troop 18.

Throughout the years, the Bellingham Lions Club has assisted the local churches and schools through their contributions of money and equipment. It has also worked consistently to improve the recreational facilities and activities for the youth of the community.

Since the Bellingham Lions Club has come into being, it has become known as the most active and successful service club that the Town of Bellingham has ever known, as well as one of the most successful Lions Clubs in the State of Massachusetts.

It is no wonder that all of its members are proud to be Lions.

THE BELLINGHAM LITTLE LEAGUE

The Bellingham Little League was organized in the Spring of 1962 to provide boys between the ages of 8 through 12 the opportunity to play organized baseball, George A. Hachey was elected as President. Application for a charter with Little League National Headquarters in Williamsport, Pennsylvania was submitted and approved. The League was incorporated with the Secretary of State of the Commonwealth. At the beginning the League was comprised of 4 Little League teams and 3 Farm teams.

In 1954 the League expanded to include 4 Senior Division teams which provided boys between the ages of 13 through 15 the opportunity to participate.

The League, due to the town's population explosion, has continually faced the need to expand and to provide for those boys between the ages of 8 and 15, desirous of playing baseball, the opportunity to do so. The League in 1968 comprised of 6 Little League teams, 4 Senior Division teams and 10 Farm teams with a total enrollment of over 400 boys.

BOY SCOUTS TROOP 18
SOUTH BELLINGHAM

Organized December 1925, Troop 18 was a unit of the Woonsocket Council Scouts, and now is intergrated into Narragansett Council of R. I. First meetings were held in the South School basement.

Charter members of the committee forming the Group of Citizens which sponsored the troop were:

Richard J. Jacks, Chairman
Charles L. Drury
Wilfred N. Dufrense
Fred Longton
John B. Davis
Edwin A. Farnell, Scoutmaster

The troop has a membership of 50 Scouts and meet in the Lyndon Murray Memorial Community Building.

THE GOLDEN EAGLES DRILL TEAM

The Golden Eagles Drill Team, sponsored by the American Legion, Arnold Spencer Post #218 an all-girl group was founded February 2, 1968. The first practice was held February 17, 1968 in the Town Hall. John May was founder, assisted by Rosa Bent, Dorothy May, Betty Alexander, and Hazel Whitely.

The purpose of this organization is to encourage responsibility and respect for others. It helps the girls keep physically fit and gives them a keen sense of competition. They have the opportunity to get together with girls their age and to pull together as a team. The aim of the organization is to have an All-Girls Drill Team and in the future to expand into an All-Girls Drum and Bugle Corps.

The Golden Eagles Drill Team has represented the Town in such parades as Milford, Natick and the American Legion Convention Parade in Boston.

John May is Drill Instructor assisted by Robert Accorsi.

SOUTH BELLINGHAM
VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

The station was built in 1927, which was prior to any fire equipment that the town owned.

The first truck was a Ford Model A. The truck was delivered in 1931 and was put into operation. This truck is presently the property of the South Bellingham Firemen's Relief Association.

The first fire chief was George Grant, appointed in 1930. He was chief for approximately six months as he died from pneumonia which he caught responding in the open truck in subzero weather to a chimney fire in North Bellingham.

The first officers were Captain Ralph Nutting and Lieutenant Al Bonin.

Wasyl Kornicki was appointed to the position of Chief to fill the vacancy made by Chief Grant's death. His son, Peter Kornicki, succeded him as Chief in 1952 to the present.

The Association was first formed in 1930. The first chairman was Anatole Debigare.

Bellingham's first fire truck

AMERICAN LEGION POST #218

The first post of the American Legion was organized and given a National Charter on September 27, 1919, by fifteen veterans of the town of Bellingham.

The post then was Bellingham Post #218 but on April 1, 1921, the post was reformed and given a new charter under the name of Edward L. Spencer Post #218.

In 1934 the post was again reformed and a new charter issued in the name of Arnold, Spencer Post #218 American Legion which it has retained.

The purposes of the organization are:

To uphold and defend the Constitution; to maintain law and order; to foster and perpetuate one hundred percent Americanism; to preserve the memories and incidents of associations in great wars; to inculcate a sense of individual obligations to the community, state and nation; to combat the autocracy of both classes and masses; to promote peace and goodwill; to safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy; and to consecrate and sanctify our comradship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

The Bellingham V.F.W. started in October 1966 receiving its charter from V.F.W. commander in chief, Leslie W. Fry.

Objects of the Veterans of Foreign Wars are: Fraternal, patriotic, historical and educational; to preserve and strengthen comradeship among members; to assist worthy comrades; to perpetuate the memory and history of our dead; to assist their widows and orphans; to maintain true allegiance to the government of the United States of America and fidelity to its constitution and laws; to foster true patriotism; to maintain and extend the institutions of American Freedom; and to preserve and defend the United States from all her enemies, whomsoever.

The V.F.W. is a concept, an idea, an endless devotion, a rallying point, a center of patriotic concern and love of fellowman such as the world has never seen.

LAKE HIAWATHA ASSOCIATION

Lake Hiawatha Association, Inc. organized March 9, 1955. The purpose of the association is to promote and encourage development of the residential colony, Lake Hiawatha, located in the Towns of Bellingham and Blackstone; to improve conditions of land owners; to foster the sport of fishing by stocking the pond; to encourage boating, fishing, and bathing; to develop and maintain a beach; to safeguard the interests of its members and land owners; to establish and maintain a place for meetings and social activities; to purchase, lease, hold, sell, convey, acquire, or dispose of real estate and personal property necessary in carrying out the purposes of the corporation; and anything permissable under Chapter 180 of the General Laws, which includes the right to apply for a license to sell alcoholic beverages.

Lake Hiawatha Association, Inc. acquired legal title to certain parcels of land to be used for beach purposes only, all roads shown on Sections 1, 2, and 3 of the Lake Hiawatha plan book, and to the Lake itself including land there under, privileges, rights of flowage therein, together with the dam and water controls.

Membership in the association is limited to landowners and residents of the area which includes land from Chestnut Street to Scott Hill Blvd. and all streets around the Lake Colony.

THE BELLINGHAM POLICE RELIEF ASSOCIATION

The Association was organized in 1956 to raise funds for sick and disabled members of the Police Association. At the first meeting, in May of 1957, the following officers were elected:

Euclide Fleuette, President and Treasurer
Norman McLinden, Vice President
Albert Grennon, Secretary

The first Policeman's Ball took place in October of that same year.

The Police Relief Association has supported charitable organizations, sponsored Little League ball teams and donated to needy families.

BELLINGHAM CENTER FIREFIGHTERS CLUB

The Bellingham Center Firefighters Club was formed in the spring of 1942, as the social segment of a hard-working and most dedicated group of volunteers.

Since that time it has grown in stature by serving the community.

Over the years the club has been very active in the running of different affairs. They have had circuses, donkey baseball games, chicken Bar B-Q, dances, the Firemen's Ball, and many other affairs.

The proceeds from these affairs were used to buy uniforms for the men in 1955. The most important project each year is operation "Santa Claus", when they purchase a new toy for every needy child in town. It is delivered personally by Santa Claus, who arrives at their house on a firetruck. There is also a Santa at Station #2, and a party for any child who wishes to attend.

The men of Station #2 are not only Firemen, club members but dedicated Rescuemen, looking out for the safety and protection of every person in Bellingham.

BEAVER POND FISH & GAME CLUB

The club was organized on March 6, 1931.

Its purpose is to stock the open waters and covers of Beaver Pond, also to promote the interest of the legitimate sport of Fish and Game within the State. The membership is limited to 50. Present officers are: J. L. McTiernan, President; J. Nestor, Vice President; D. A. Varney, Treasurer; and P. Touhey, Secretary.

THE NORTH BELLINGHAM FIREFIGHTERS CLUB

The North Bellingham Firefighters Club was formed in October of 1962 with the North firemen as members. In 1963, John Ridolfi, Jr. became the Club's first president. Meetings are held on the first Monday of the month.

The Club's main function is to raise funds for its advancement. Club members purchase their own uniforms and hold an annual banquet for the Installation of Officers.

THE BELLINGHAM GRANGE

The Bellingham Grange has been active for 78 of the organization's 102 year history. In 1891, members, who attended meetings either on foot or by horse and carriage, had to purchase wood to heat Town Hall for their meetings.

The Grange contributes to Civic enterprises, health drives and delivers Sunday papers to Pondville Hospital as a project of their Home and Community Service. The Grange has erected bus shelters for children and provided Town Hall with a new floor, a kitchen range, and stage and wing curtains.

The Order outstandingly contributes to the Educational Aid Fund for young members to attend degree granting colleges, participates in Conservation and Wild Life preservation and is instrumental in good law and tax representation for those in the Farming and Dairy Industries.

The National Grange, which celebrated its Centennial in 1967, was the only Fraternal Order to have a stamp created for its celebration.

Bellingham Grange #190 P. of H. was organized May 22, 1891 by Deputy George Chase of Medway with Carrol White, its first master. In January, 1901, a committee was chosen to push the matter of "free mail delivery". The organization is responsible for R.F.D. today.

The Bellingham order has six Gold Sheaf Members, those who have been members for 50 continuous years. They include: Arthur Rhodes, Mildred Rhodes, Warren Whiting, Elizabeth Whiting, Ethel Graves and Marie Cooke.

LADIES OF ST. ANNE SOCIETY

The Society began the same year Assumption Parish was founded, 1927. First President was the late Mrs. Rosalphe Brodeur.

For two years the name was "La Societe de L'Assomption". The aims and directives of the Society were to gather French speaking women of the parish together to help each other spiritually and aid the parish financially where there is need. Missions are an important concern of the society, the parish school, students, and the Sisters.

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

The American Legion Auxiliary unit of the Arnold Spencer Post #218 received their charter on April 9, 1935. Alice Beausoliel (Lussier) was the first president.

The organization's activities are designed to carry out parts of the American Legion's program which can best be accomplished by women. Rehabilitation of disabled veterans of all wars, aids those hospitalized and assists thousands to regain a place in civilian life. They also assist the families of ex-servicemen who are unable to work or are hospitalized.

A special gift shop program for the West Roxbury Veterans hospital during the Christmas season is a source of cheer and happiness to the veteran and his family. During the summer these veterans are entertained in Bellingham, under a program started by Mrs. Esther Clinton.

Child Welfare activities slogan is "A Square Deal for Every Child". They cooperate with local agencies and schools to see that children are properly clothed and fed. At Thanksgiving and Christmas, baskets of food and toys are distributed by monies derived from the sale of poppies twice a year.

The final approval of a Girl's State candidate is made by the Auxiliary unit. Qualifications for this honor are: leadership, character, courage, honesty, scholarship, cooperativeness and physical fitness.

Brief histories were also requested of the following clubs and organizations but were not submitted to this committee:

Boy Scouts Troop 100
Boy Scouts Troop 120
North Baptist Church Ladies Aid
St. Blaise Holy Name Society
St. Blaise Guild
Bungay Brook Rod and Gun Club
P.T.A.
Knights of Columbus
Jay Cee's
Franco American Club
Auxiliary of Franco American Club
Falcon Football Team
Bellingham Sportsmen's Club

LADIES AUXILIARY TO THE VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

The Ladies Auxiliary to the Veterans of Foreign Wars of Bellingham Post #7272 was formed in November, 1967.

The Installation of the Auxiliary was held on January 13, 1968 at the Lt. Robert Frascotti Post #1544 V.F.W. in Milford, Mass.

The objectives of this group are the same as its parent organization.

Among their projects are included: aid to V. A. Hospitals, rehabilitation of veterans and their families, community services and Project Vietnam in which packages are sent to all local servicemen there.

An auction, cake sales and card parties have been held to raise money to carry out these projects.

For 1969, in conjunction with all state V.F.W. organizations, their goal is to purchase a bus for the Holyoke Soldiers Home which will enable the veterans to travel to various functions throughout the state.

Benedict's "History of the Baptist's says: "Bellingham was for many years the favorite resort of the few Baptist ministers in the country."

A portion of a complaint to the General Court concerning the town's overburden from tax evaluation states: "One-third of the inhabitants are really poor; the greater part of the land is sandy Dry Pitch Pine or hard barren land; there are four mills in town but they do not run more than four months in a year by reason of flowing meadows in the spring and want of water in the fall; and the cow pastures, tons of hay and barrels of cider were valued above neighboring towns."

After a quarrel with his congregation, the Rev. Abial Fisher left town saying "he would get out of Bellingham, something that the devil never did."

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Town of Bellingham's General Anniversary Committee takes pleasure in acknowledging, with many thanks, the sub-committee, namely the History Committee, for the many hours of volunteer time that they spent in compiling the facts and stories to make this History Book an interesting and factual piece of reading.

References to facts up to 1919 were taken from the book written by George F. Partridge for the 200th anniversary year.

The last fifty years facts have been compiled after carefully scrutenizing of the Annual Town Reports.

The interesting stories brought together to round out the book have been donated by cooperative townspeople and people from neighboring towns.

HISTORY COMMITTEE

Vincent Thayer, Chairman

Thelma Ambler, Vice-Chairman

Ida Hood, Secretary

Jean Brennan

Olive Burr

Mary Caccavelli

Susan Canale Parenteau

Joseph Cortes

John Lundvall

Dorothy O'Connell

Ernest Taft, Jr.

Kenneth Tiernan

Sheila Vicini

Walter Wentzel

Photographs lent by . . . .

Thelma Ambler
Bellingham Library
Ethel Berardi
Bernice Bibbins
Alva Brown
Olive Burr
Edward Cameron
Center Baptist Church
Clarence Cook
Alice Crooks
Irma Crooks
Edward & Cecile Deneault
Francis Donovan
Leila Dufresne
William Fairbanks
Marjorie Belcher Greene
Aaron Hobart
Ida Hood
Robert Hunter
Florence Spencer Kingsbury
Frank Lewinsky
Walter Lewinsky
John Lundvall
Clara Macy
John & Florence McCracken
Doris Naughton
Eunice Nicholson
Alfred Rattie
Arthur & Mildred Rhodes
Charlotte Rhodes
Del Rotatori
Althea Sabin
Edgar L. Scott
Levi & Eleanor Smith
Veronica Smith
Ruth Spieler
South Bellingham Firemen's Relief Assn.
Vincent Thayer
Orie Van Rye
Walter Wentzel
Marion White
Warren Whitting

The 250th

A group of belles modeling costumes of their individual charters.

Brothers of the Brush — "Some did, some didn't" — $2.00 button either way.

"The Mountaineers" entertained at many social events.

Anniversary Celebration

One Junior Belles Charter raised funds by holding a food sale.

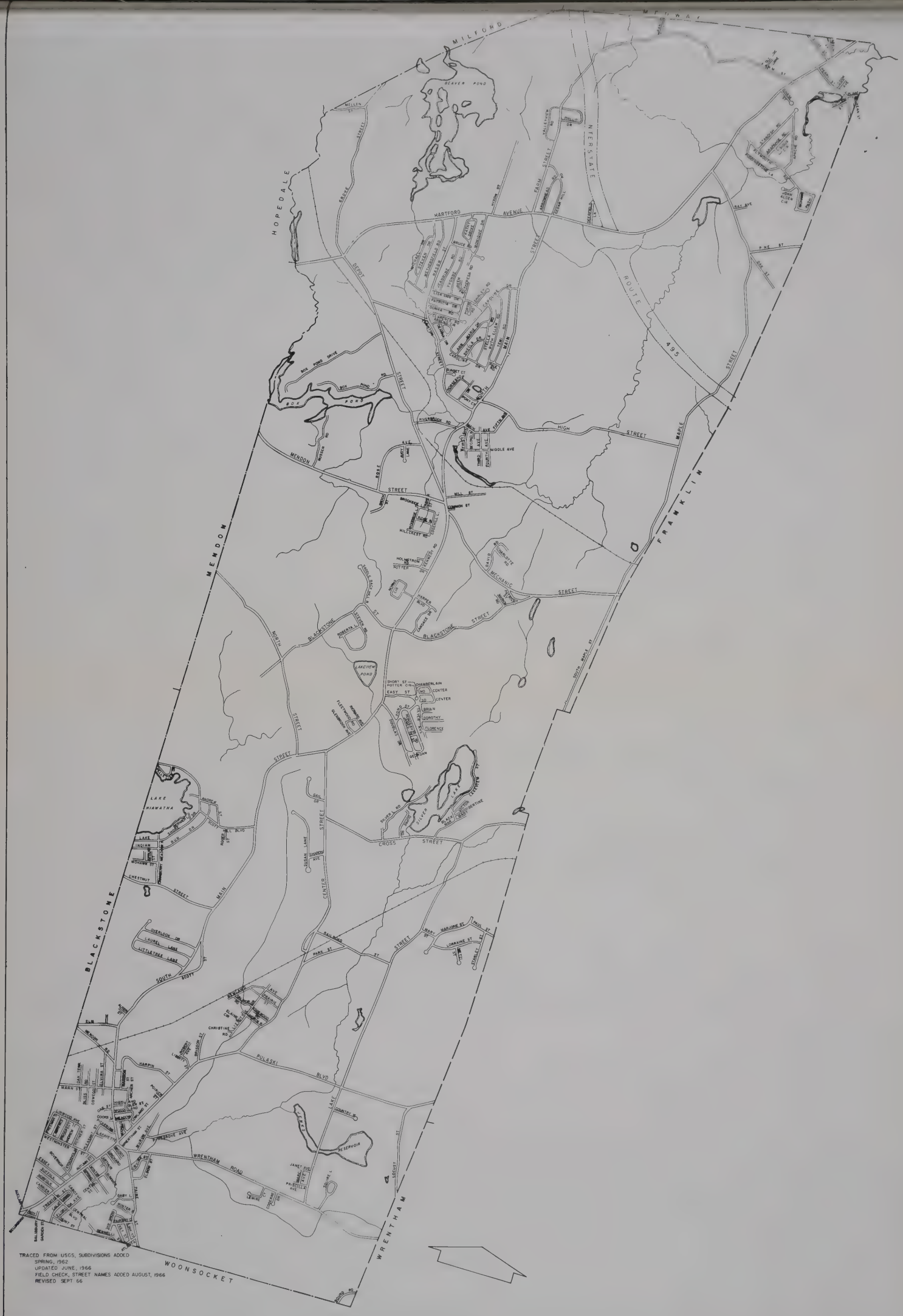
Typical couple depicting an era during the Town's early history.

250th Anniversary Events

January	1	Brothers of the Brush Burying the Razor
	5	Celebrity Belles unveiling the Birthday Cake
	9	Celebrity Belles and Brothers of the Brush on Dialing for Dollars on Channel 12
	18	Old Timers Dance — Bellingham Amusement Club sponsored by Brothers of the Brush
	19	Cake Sale at Howe's Drug Store by the Jr. Belle Undecidabelles.
	25	Las Vagas — Jez-a-belles at Bellingham Amusement Club
	31	Lions Dance at Beverly Club — semi-formal
February	4	Celebrity Belles and Brothers of the Brush on Dialing for Dollars on Channel 12
	7	Cake sale by the Maybelles
	8	Winter Festival Dance
	9	Sausage and Pancake Breakfast by the Cameo Belles
	14	Moon Maidens cake sale at Warwick
	15	Sassi-Sals Mardi Gras at Bellingham Amusement Club Cake Sale by Lilies of the Valley — Valley Belles
	17	French Belles — women's buffet at Franco Club
	20	Whist party and Penny Social by Buttons & Bows
	22	Adorables sponsored teen-age dance Fire Hosettes & Rosettes Dance at North Community Building
March	1	Jaycees — Battle of the Bands
	6	Celebrity Belles and Brothers of the Brush on Dialing for Dollars on Channel 12
	7	Polka Dance at Lakeview Cracker Barrel Cake Sale

March	8	Lake Hiawatha Indian Belles sponsored Rev. Palmquist — Cartoonist and Lecturer
	9	Country & Western Night sponsored by Harper Valley Belles
	14-15	Sled Dog Races
	15	St. Patrick's Day Dance by the Lilies of the Valley & Valley Belles Calico Cuties teen dance at North Community Building
	19	Auction of low numbered coins
	21	History book to go on sale at Town Meeting
	22	French Belles Square Dance — Bellingham Amusement Club
	23	Sunshine Belles to have Ceramic Fair
	27	Penny Sale & Whist by the White Doves
	27 & 28	Cake and Easter Basket Sale by the Wampanetts
	28	Harlem Magicians vs. Bellingham Colonials
	29	Mountaineers will entertain at the Hopedale Home for the Elderly Jaycees — Battle of the Bands
April	11	St. Brendan's Whist Party
	12	Bellingham Lions Las Vegas Night
	16	Ladies of St. Anne event at Assumption Parish Hall Celebrity Belles and Brothers of the Brush on Dialing for Dollars on Channel 12
	18	St. Brendan's Whist Party at Town Hall
	19	Swinging Belles Chinese Supper at Bungay Brook
	20	French Belles Champagne Brunch at Franco Club
	24	Bell Ringers sponsor speaker — Rev. Mildred Palmer — at Macy School
	25	Belles Costume Dance at Lakeview
	26	Bellerettes Jr. Belles Dance at Assumption Hall
	27	Cake Sale by Hosettes and Rosettes at Rockledge Farm

May	3, 4, 5	Boy Scout Jambouree
	3	St. Blaise Fair
	4	Old Fashioned Family Picnic and Field Day by the Crackerbarrels
	10	Fireman's Ball at Lakeview
	16, 17, 18	Baptist Church Play at Bellingham High School
	17	French Belles Strawberry Festival at Franco Club Dance at Vermettes by Polka Dot Belles
	18	Brothers of the Brush Auction Bicycle Race — 25 miles
	24	Clarinettes Hay Ride Liberty Belles Block Dance
	25	Bungay Brook Polish Picnic
June	1	Lake Hiawatha Picnic
	7 & 8	Art Festival — Bellingham High School Brothers of the Brush Event.
	14	Rhode Island Philharmonic Youth Orchestra Concert
	15	Brothers of the Brush Field Day
	16	International Water Follies (16th thru 21st) Rain date 22nd
	20	Junior Anniversary Ball at Lakeview
	21	Historical Display opens at Bellingham High School Miss 250th Anniversary Pageant
	22	Ecumenical Service Historical Tour of Old Homes 1-5 P.M. Polish American Club — Polish Picnic
	23	Jubilee Midway Opens (23rd-29th)
	24	Salute to Bellingham at Bay State Raceway, Foxboro, Mass.
	26	Anniversary Formal Ball featuring Les & Larry Elgart at Lakeview
	27	Gala Stage Show starring Gordon MacRae
	28	Fireworks Display Fireman's Muster
	29	Anniversary Parade



PREPARED BY PHILIP B. HERR & ASSOCIATES, PLANNING CONSULTANTS, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

800 0 1000 2000 3000 4000 FT.

PLANNING BOARD · BELLINGHAM · MASSACHUSETTS

A
PLAN
OF
BELLINGHAM,
NORFOLK COUNTY,
MASS.
SURVEYED BY NEWELL NELSON,
in Aug.t & Sep.t
1830.
Pendleton's Lithography, Boston.
BELLINGHAM was Incorporated Nov. 27th 1719. it contains 11400 Acres. - The centre of Bellingham is situated thirty miles from Boston and twenty from Dedham.
This colour represents a piece of land that is in dispute between Bellingham and Mendon; Bellingham claims westerly to the straight line, Mendon claims eastwardly to Charles River.
Population in 1810 - 766 - in 1820 - 1034 - in 1830 - 1,101.
Explanation.
Roads
Streams
Meeting Houses
School do.
Dwelling
Corn Mills
Saw Mills
Cotton Manufactories
Woollen D.o
Iron Mine
Scale. - 100 Rods to an Inch.
1 mile.
Charles River
Peter's River
Hungry Brook
Meet.g House
Centre School House
E. Bridges
Harvard Meet.g House
Ezekiel Bates
Elisha Burr
Solomon Wright
Seth Cook
Bethuel Slocomb
Jos.h Rockwood
Allen Chase
Chilson's Parsons
Martin Chilson
John Chilson
Yahum Cook
Jos. Pratt
Stephen Lawrence
Nathan Kelley
Thaddeus Cook
Stephen Sayles
Seth Sherman
Ebenr Thayer
Ebenr Cook
Wm. Whitaker
Jeshabad Chilson
Rory Darling
Andrew Cook
Baruch Aldrich
Calvin Barber
Aquilla Cook
School No. 6
Rev.d Cook's
Jos. Crooks
Jer.h Crooks
Wm. Paine
John Chilson Jr.
John Rhodes
Abimelech Darling
Saml. Scott
Wm. Scott
Asa Hall
Jacob Arnold
Elisha Scott
Geo. Tafft
Saml. R. Scott
Patience Bartlett
Daniel Arnold
Abner Cook
David Cook
Nathan A. Dan.l Cook
Noah Cook
Jos. Cook
Jos.h Cook
Henry Holbrook
Warren Lasdel
Amos Thompson
Emory Cook
Otis Bates
Luther Thayer
Manning Thayer
Elijah Bates
Wheelock Bullard
Wm. M. Thayer
Simeon Burr
Ezra Bosworth
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Eber K. Brown
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Aphonia Thayer
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Ames Gay
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Ames Adams
Nahum Adams
Samuel Adams
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Wm. Cushman
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Nathan Kelley
Elisha Kelley
Carah Pickering
Calvin Barber
Baruch Aldrich
Andrew Cook
Rory Darling
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Jos.h Cook
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Lyman Thayer

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1969 FEB 1 PM 1 21

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I WANT YOU TO KNOW HOW MUCH I SHARE THE PRIDE THAT FILLS YOUR HEARTS AS YOU REFLECT ON THE YEARS OF INTEGRITY, INDUSTRY AND HARD WORK THAT FILL THE PAGES OF BELLINGHAM'S EVENTFUL HISTORY.

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March 20, 1969

To the Townspeople of Bellingham:

My heartiest congratulations to the Town of Bellingham on its 250th Anniversary.

Occasions such as this make us feel closer to our early history and to the men and women who founded our communities and fashioned our free democratic institutions. If the times in which they lived seem simple in comparison to our own, the problems they faced were nonetheless awesome to them. We must strive to emulate their wisdom and ingenuity in making our government an effective and responsive instrument for meeting the needs of an evolving society.

You are bearers of a proud heritage, and it is a privilege for me to be representing Bellingham in the Massachusetts Senate as you pass this impressive landmark in your Town's history.

Sincerely,

John M. Quinlan

John M. Quinlan
State Senator
Second Norfolk District

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The 250th Committee wishes to thank all our dedicated citizens who worked so hard and diligently toward a successful birthday celebration for our great Town of Bellingham.

To the residents of Bellingham who gave us tremendous support and inspiration to present a worthy celebration we sincerely thank you.

May we take this opportunity to congratulate our Town on its birthday and may it prosper in the many years to come.

The 250th Anniversary Committee

Robert E. Nutting
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